



Annual Statement on Research Integrity for 2024/2025

Section 1: Key contact information

Question	Response
1A. Name of organisation	University of York
1B. Type of organisation: higher education institution/industry/independent research performing organisation/other (please state)	Higher education institution
1C. Date statement approved by governing body (DD/MM/YY)	University Research Committee: 25/09/25 Senate: [add] Council: [add]
1D. Web address of organisation's research integrity page (if applicable)	Research Integrity and Ethics
1E. Named senior member of staff to oversee research integrity	Name: Professor Sarah Thompson
	Email address: sarah.thompson@york.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: Zoe Deacy-Clarke



	Email address: zoe.deacy-clarke@york.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

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. You may find it helpful to consider the following broad headings:

- Policies and systems
- Communications and engagement
- Culture, development and leadership
- Monitoring and reporting

Following the release of the third edition of the Concordat to Support Research Integrity, York has continued our work to reflect and embed the principles of the Concordat in our activity. Our [Code of Practice on Research Integrity](#), the [Code of Practice and Principles for Good Ethical Governance](#), and the revised [Research Misconduct Policy and Procedure](#) lay out the core values and expectations of the University and the consequences of breaching these. They are supplemented by further policies and guidance documents concerning more specialised areas, for example the use of [social media data in research](#) or the [payment of individuals involved with or participating in research](#). The latter of these is used regularly as a reference point across the sector as an example of a thorough and clear policy on the topic. Our policies and procedures are available here: <https://www.york.ac.uk/staff/research/governance/research-policies/>.

The University has been working to assess compliance against the listed requirements for employers of researchers in the third edition of the Concordat to Support Research Integrity. As part of this, the PIP Officer for Integrity would work through the UKRIO Self-Assessment Tool and use this to structure further activity;



this is discussed further in 2C (Reflections on Progress and Plans for Future Developments).

Policies relating to research are owned by the University Research Committee (URC), which is empowered by University Senate to oversee research activity at the University, including advising on research strategy, approving internal policy and monitoring research performance. Policy development is led by the Policy, Integrity and Performance (PIP) Office, which sits within the Directorate of Research, Enterprise and Knowledge Exchange (RIKE). A consultative approach is taken to the process of developing policy; this involves taking input from a range of colleagues, both in academic and professional services roles, and collaborating with other teams across the institution. Frequent partners are the York Graduate Research School, the Library and pre- and post-award teams across Faculties.

The above is supported further by our training and development work. The University offers a range of training options on topics concerning research integrity, including our integrity and ethics training (online and in-person), as well as specific training for supervisors and workshops for both Trusted Research and export control. The University remains involved with sector-wide groups, such as the Russell Group Research Integrity Forum and the HEECA, to ensure awareness of and alignment with norms and expectations within the sector. Research integrity is also a key feature of the Research Culture Action plan, and we work in partnership with the Research Culture Working Group to embed this principle across the University.

Effective monitoring of research activity is a necessary aspect of supporting research integrity. To this end, our Academic Ethics and Compliance Committee (AECC) runs an annual audit process in line with ESRC requirements, as well as coordinating a regular review cycle for Local Research Ethics Committees (LRECs). Although our Annual Research Review (ARR) process does not ask specifically about research integrity, we ask about the research environment and areas of development, providing an opportunity for departments to comment on research integrity matters if they wish. As part of the work on our University Research Strategy, work has taken place to develop an implementation plan which outlines reporting routes for areas of activity (including that relating to research integrity and responsible research and innovation), ensuring appropriate oversight of activity and monitoring of any such work.

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.

During 2024/25, the University has undertaken the following actions and activities to support and strengthen understanding and application of research integrity issues:

- (a) The implementation of the [Research Strategy](#) has continued over 2024/25, with a core component of this being the embedding of the principles and culture of responsible research and innovation. Our Research Strategy emphasises at all stages the importance of acting in the interest of public good. The Research Strategy had been used to develop an action plan for URC over 2024/2025, and this process would be repeated again for 2025/2026.
- (b) The review of the [Research Misconduct Policy and Procedure](#) had been completed and the policy was now available on the University website. The updated policy had been communicated through various channels to ensure awareness. Some aspects of University Regulations had been updated in line with the revised policy; for example, Regulation 7 now includes "serious or repeated research misconduct" under Acts of Misconduct.
- (c) Work was underway to complete a gap analysis against the requirements of the updated Concordat to Support Research Integrity, with the intent of this helping to structure activity over the year ahead.
- (d) Extensive work had taken place to develop resources on the use of AI in research. This included a [policy and best practice document for researchers](#), which was approved by URC in April 2025 and set out the standards and expectations of AI use at each stage of research. Other resources, such as our guidance on the use of Generative Artificial Intelligence in PGR programmes and general guidance on generative AI tools from an IT perspective, are signposted as part of the document. Conversation was ongoing within the AECC regarding the incorporation of generative AI in ethics forms; this was supported by the creation of a 'best practice' log for LREC Chairs to contribute suggestions and examples of the management of AI in the ethics approval process.
- (e) The Faculty of Social Sciences was in the process of combining the ELMPS and SPSW committees into a wider Faculty of Social Sciences Ethics Committee. This was done in the interest of providing greater Faculty-oversight of research ethics and streamlining the process where possible.

- (f) The format of the Annual Ethics Return completed by LRECs was under review and would be assessed to ensure the process encouraged the most helpful and useful reflection from Committees. This work would be taken forward by the AECC and the PIP Officer for Ethics and Compliance.
- (g) The process for pre-award due diligence had been refreshed and expanded. The tripartite revision involved:
- i. replacement of operational risk questionnaire with Collaboration Welcome Note;
 - ii. addition of a new 'Know Your Partner' reputational risk check; *and*
 - iii. addition of a new Trusted Research triage.
- (h) The PIP Team was working to implement the changes required by the Foreign Influence Registration Scheme. The requirements of the Scheme had been communicated across the institution and guidance was available from the Research Integrity and Compliance Manager.
- (i) The Collaboration Welcome Note developed by the PIP Team had been shared across the institution and with colleagues across the sector, where it had been praised for its succinct communication of core issues. The Welcome Note addresses operational due diligence by making collaborators aware of both their responsibilities and those of the University, in a supportive and collaborative manner.
- (j) Amendments to the [Policy on the Payment of Individuals for Involvement with or Contribution to Research](#) were approved by URC; these amendments were aimed at improving the clarity of the policy and addressed a number of queries which had been raised by the research community. The Involvement@York Team had also developed a range of guidance documents for both [researchers](#) and [members of the public](#), available on the University webpages.
- (k) A new Ethics and Compliance Officer had joined the PIP Team, who would take forward the review of ethical governance at the University to ensure processes were as efficient and effective as possible.
- (l) Work continued in relation to ethics in Patient and Public Involvement (PPI) in research. Conversation had taken place on this count and would be taken forward by the PIP Officer for Ethics and Compliance and Involvement@York.
- (m) The first year of implementation of the [Research Reputation and Social Responsibility Framework](#) had been successful. The Framework was under review as planned and amendments would be made to provide further specificity as to the criteria used in decision making and the process of escalation, decision and communication.



- (n) The PIP Officer for Integrity continued to act as an expert reviewer for Epigeum and SAGE Publishing on their Research Integrity training module, speaking to the position of York within the sector and allowing greater insight into the development of high-quality training materials.
- (o) To address the gap identified in RDM guidance for research enabling staff, materials have been written for inclusion in a Research Operations Hub Toolkit. The Toolkit has been reviewed by Team Leaders in the Faculty Operations Teams, staff who will be running initial grant meetings. After review and approval through the Operations Policy & Process Delivery Group, the Toolkit will be available to Professional Support Staff and researchers from August.
- (p) Following participation in a newly formed N8 CIR RDM community by the Open Research team, was underway concerning data steward roles across the sector and the development of indicative job descriptions.
- (q) Globus, research cyberinfrastructure, had been purchased and was used by a number of researchers. IT Services were in the process of implementing support for its use.
- (r) The Open Research team, in collaboration with the Information Governance Team in Legal Services, developed and delivered a new workshop on [Managing sensitive research data](#) in June 2025. This awareness raising session outlines some of the key principles for researchers to bear in mind when working with sensitive research data. Going forward this session will be offered twice a year to staff and postgraduate researchers through York's [Researcher Development Programme](#).
- (s) A number of video recordings have been produced for inclusion on our [Research data management: a practical guide](#), a guide to help researchers manage their research data well. New recordings for [data management plans](#), [choosing a data repository](#) and for using our institutional data repository ([Research Data York](#)) were developed; along with updates to our video briefing on [RDM for supervisors of postgraduate researchers](#).
- (t) The Open Research team collated feedback from key stakeholders within the University on the [UKRI's draft research data policy](#). Feedback was submitted as part of UKRI's consultation, an endeavour to ensure the new UKRI policy is fit for purpose and that our researchers can be appropriately supported in meeting the requirements.
- (u) [Fair attribution guidance](#) has been published and communicated to all research staff. PGRs and their supervisors will be required to acknowledge



that they have read and agree to the guidance before they start their research, starting from the new academic year (Sept 25 onwards)

- (v) The [Valuing Voices tool](#) was launched in May 2025. It helps research staff to plan equitable and responsible research projects, including supporting the assessment of risk in research in an open-minded and inclusive manner. The tool is currently in its beta form and is open to research staff worldwide to use and provide feedback, prior to the launch of the final version later in 2025.
- (w) The Enhancing Research Culture Fund had supported work to address harassment and sexual misconduct experienced by PGRs. The project, led by Dr Anna Bull and Kelly Prince, had led to the development of a toolkit of resources and information on the topic.
- (x) The University had signed up to the UKRIO Online Training Module, and would use this to both supplement existing training and assess gaps in current provision.
- (y) Training on Responsible Research and Innovation continued to be provided by the BRIC Team, in partnership with PIP. The PIP Team was able to attend specific departmental meetings in addition to this regular training.
- (z) The Research Ethics Committee for Social Policy and Social Work had implemented 'drop-in workshops' for research ethics. These sessions have improved the quality of applications received. Applicants, including students, are encouraged to discuss their research with the committee as they prepare applications.

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.

As is the case across much of the sector, 2024/2025 has at times been a challenging year. Changes to government expectations, increased workload and financial issues have continued to affect activity at the University. Despite this, we remain proud of what has been achieved this year by both research and professional services staff, and the high-quality support for research that is demonstrated in this Annual Statement.



A significant achievement this year has been the completion of the review of the Research Misconduct Policy and Procedure (discussed in 2B(b), above). The completion of this was a result of collaboration between PIP, HR and the York Graduate Research School, which has resulted in a robust and thorough document that is aligned with best practice.

The implementation of the Research Strategy continues to progress, and this includes continual reflection on progress against the Principles and Objectives of the Research Strategy. URC is the institutional lead on the implementation of the Strategy, and regularly receives reports from groups and individuals across the University on activity taking place in support of these goals. [\[more needed here?\]](#)

Reflecting on our key action points from 2023/2024, we have been successful on all three counts. The revised Research Misconduct Policy & Procedure was approved by URC and then made available from August 2025, and now reflects best practice within the sector. As part of this, we have been able to take the “more structured approach to communication and dissemination” of policies that we noted as a goal in the 2023/2024 Statement, with the implementation of this policy guided by a communications plan and the principles set out in our Guidance on Policy Development. Although our training offer has not been reviewed in full, we have recently signed up to the UKRIO online training module and will use this to assess our resources and make amendments as required.

Key action points for 2025/2026 are:

- Completing a gap analysis to confirm compliance with the Concordat to Support Research Integrity, and taking actions forward as needed
- Reviewing and updating the following; (i) Statement on Safeguarding in Research, (ii) Code of Practice and Principles on Research Integrity, and (iii) Code of Practice and Principles for Good Ethical Governance.
- Reviewing our training offer and making changes where necessary.



Section 3: 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 University is committed to investigating all allegations of misconduct in a robust, fair and timely manner. Our [Research Misconduct Policy and Procedure](#) (RMP&P) was updated over 2024/2025 and is now available on the University webpages. The RMP&P outlines how any investigations will be carried out with consideration for the well-being of all parties, and was developed with the goals of increasing clarity and usability for all involved in the process. The UKRIO template procedure for the investigation of allegations of research misconduct was used as a basis for our Policy, and as such we are confident that the revised Policy reflects best practice across the sector. Key changes are:

- The definition of research misconduct has been amended to reflect the language used in the Concordat; there are no substantive changes to the content.
- The policy now specifies that independent members must be included on formal investigation panels, as is required under the Concordat. Although



this is a large change, we are able to seek advice and guidance on this from the UK Research Integrity Office.

- An appeals process has been added in line with best practice across the sector.

The RMP&P is supported and contextualised by our wider [policy framework](#). Our [Code of Practice on Research Integrity](#) specifies that “each member of the University community has a responsibility to foster an environment which promotes intellectual honesty and integrity”, and that to support this, the University will “protect the interests of those who draw attention to possible misconduct in good faith” (7.2). The Code of Practice also refers to the UKRIO [Guidance for Researchers on Retractions in Academic Journals](#) (2010), which states that ‘an admission of honest errors in research should in no way be construed as misconduct; on the contrary, the reporting of genuine mistakes is in accordance with good practice in research’.

This no-detriment approach is key to the stance of York and is seen in other policies governing research, including our [Statement on Safeguarding in Research](#), and our [Research Misconduct Policy and Procedure](#). The latter also makes specific provision for the consideration of equality and diversity, to ensure such allegations are handled in a sensitive and fair manner. Our [Code of Practice and Principles for Good Ethical Governance](#) clearly sets out the ethical framework through which researchers must operate, emphasising the responsibility of researchers to identify and mitigate (as far as possible) ethical considerations arising from their work. This provides researchers with the requisite information to understand their responsibilities and potential pitfalls, strengthening their approach to their work and the available resources. Some examples of key supplementary policies are the [Speak Up \(Public Interest Disclosure\)](#) and the [Dignity at Work and Study Policy](#); respectively, these provide a framework for the raising of concerns (addressing concerns around backlash for speaking up), and procedures and mechanisms to report and address incidents of harassment, bullying and hate incidents.

Alongside putting in place formal policies and procedures, the University of York is committed to fostering a supportive research environment in which all staff, researchers and students feel comfortable to report instances of misconduct. We are driven by a recognition that a culture of integrity is supported and maintained by a transparent environment in which mistakes can be addressed openly. With respect to this, our [Research Misconduct Policy and Procedure](#) includes provision for informal discussion and referral to alternate institutional procedures (for example, where the issue is judged to relate to a training need the Capability Procedure may be invoked).



We are dedicated to supporting a research culture which encourages and enables these honest, in-depth discussions on research integrity; this is supported by the Research Culture Working Group (RCWG), noted above (2A (Description of current systems and culture)). The work of the RCWG serves to broaden discussions around research culture, embedding a deeper understanding of the issues and risk factors surrounding research misconduct.

The University is keen to optimise the effectiveness of ethical oversight at York, in the interest of fostering an open environment in which ethics and integrity are embedded in conversations and planning, and discussed within a supportive culture where advice can be sought rather than via formal recourse to misconduct investigations. To this end, our [Local Research Ethics Committees](#) (LRECs) are encouraged to share good practice and discuss issues openly; for example, a shared 'good practice' document has been made available to Chairs of LRECs and members of the AECC to enable the discussion and sharing of practices around generative AI in research. We use our training resources to reinforce and communicate the values of research integrity with respect to research misconduct, and the content of these resources is responsive to the lessons learnt in research misconduct cases.

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				
Falsification				
Plagiarism				
Failure to meet legal, ethical and professional obligations	1			
Misrepresentation (eg data; involvement; interests; qualification; and/or publication history)				



Improper dealing with allegations of misconduct	1			
Multiple areas of concern (when received in a single allegation)	1	1		1
<i>Other*</i>				
Total:	3	1	0	1
*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.				
N/A				