

UK Committee on Research Integrity – 2023-2025 work plan

Strategic objectives		Work plan	
Pillar 1 – Promote research integrity	1.1	<p>Identify and amplify examples of good practice by engaging across the research system and showcasing evidence and practice in an annual statement</p>	<p>We will publish an annual statement on research integrity in the UK and have a programme of engagement with senior leaders based around key areas raised in that year’s report.</p> <p>We published our first annual statement in July 2023, illustrated with case studies and have launched a series of additional case studies on our website.</p> <p>We have published an analysis of Higher Education Institutions’ annual research integrity statements. We will repeat and extend this analysis in 2025 to include annual research integrity statements from funders, independent research organisations, and government departments and bodies.</p> <p>In 2024 we will work with the Concordat Signatories to learn from the pilot annual statement template and identify next steps for reporting.</p>
	1.2	<p>Embed research integrity in discussions about research culture by engaging with key stakeholders and members of the research community to understand practices and encourage focus on integrity</p>	<p>We will continue to embed research integrity in discussions about research culture. In 2023-2024 we will promote dialogue with groups active in promotion of a research culture that prioritises care and respect for all involved in research to support alignment between work on research culture and research integrity.</p> <p>In 2022-23 we visited a range of research organisations to understand their approaches to research integrity and hosted roundtable discussions in Scotland and Wales.</p>
	1.3	<p>Work across the UK research system to bring together existing groups by partnering with others for distinct projects, co-design and co-deliver events, and participate in forums led by others</p>	<p>To strengthen accountability frameworks, in 2023-2024 we will work to understand and share best practice to demonstrate how accountability for research integrity can be embedded into organisations’ structure and governance. In 2022 we convened workshops on accountability for research integrity and published a report.</p>
Pillar 2 – support research integrity	2.1	<p>Define the current landscape of research integrity by producing a map of existing bodies and their roles in the supporting high integrity</p>	<p>To provide information about how best to intervene, we are commissioning a review of the positive and negative influences on research integrity. This will be completed in 2024.</p>
	2.2	<p>Enhance collaboration between existing bodies by creating opportunities for discussion by convening forums, providing connections, and making introductions nationally and internationally</p>	<p>To address the growing use and impact of AI, we will continue our work to convene expert stakeholders. In 2023, this group will grow and will identify knowledge gaps and next steps.</p> <p>To support a full understanding of rigour, and the diverse disciplinary approaches to it, we will use our convening role to work with learned societies and professional bodies to develop discussions of, and public</p>

			<p>articulation about, what constitutes rigour in their disciplines. Such discussions would benefit from the inclusion of researchers from across industry, government, higher education institutions and other research sectors.</p> <p>While much of the Annual Statement focused on Higher Education contexts, research takes place in many other settings: charities, government, and others commission research. All research should share the same high standards of integrity to improve confidence in the findings, and to help ensure its quality. We will work to raise awareness of accountability within procurement processes and to embed the principles of research integrity as an expectation of commissioned work.</p>
	2.3	Make recommendations for/to the UK research system by providing strategic input into policies, processes, and guidance, including through international and national initiatives and consultations	<p>We will continue to advocate for research integrity considerations to be a core part of research assessment in REF2028, including recommending that data access statements and author contribution statements are mandatory for outputs (allowing for exceptions if required).</p> <p>Our work on research misconduct (see 4.1) will inform government thinking on whether an additional body is required for assurance.</p>
Pillar 3 – define the evidence base	3.1	Gather evidence about systemic pressures and enablers by identifying and characterising current evidence about research integrity and the context and opportunities to enhance research integrity	Published our first annual statement which describes current evidence about research integrity and areas where more work is needed.
	3.2	Advance discussions about integrity indicators by working with stakeholders to define and describe current evidence, practice and needs and to produce a report to prompt further work	To continue the development of responsible indicators of research integrity in 2023-2024, we will hold workshops in 2023 to take forward the work published in 2022 by UKRI, Cancer Research UK and GuildHE.
	3.3	Assemble existing evidence and knowledge about the relationship between research integrity and research quality by developing a clear narrative about the relationship between integrity and quality	We will articulate the relationship between integrity and quality in a succinct form, drawing upon our engagement and evidence building in our first year. This articulation will inform our recommendations to the sector about research assessment (see 2.3).
Pillar 4 – build new directions	4.1	Advise the sector on managing research misconduct and its impact on the research record by establishing a working group; gather and collate evidence from a neutral position; and develop recommendations relating to misconduct and poor research practice	<p>The UK does not have a national body that focuses solely on research misconduct. Our own work on poor research practice and research misconduct will build upon the UK Research Integrity Office's 2023 review of the barriers to dealing with research misconduct. We are carrying out a full analysis and consultation about what the best approach to oversight might be for the UK, which we will report in 2025.</p> <p>To enhance consistency between funders in their requirements of organisations in receipt of funding, and to reduce bureaucratic burden on research organisations, we will encourage alignment of policies and assurance processes in relation to misconduct. <i>Discussions will begin in late 2023 and continue through 2024.</i></p>

			<p>In 2023-2024 we will support and build on the work led by Wellcome and others on ways to facilitate appropriate information sharing on research misconduct.</p> <p>In 2023 we will open conversations with industry to identify how information about research misconduct might be shared by the private sector.</p>
	4.2	<p>Define the future structures needed to support research integrity by consulting across the research system and working in partnership to consider what the system needs to give confidence that UK research is of high quality, and by producing a roadmap for how this could be achieved</p>	<p>Our work on research misconduct and appropriate assurance systems (see 4.1) will make recommendations for system changes in those areas and inform the whole system picture.</p> <p>Our work under pillars 1-3 will inform our articulation of the future structures needed to support research integrity in the UK. Our recommendations will follow consultation in 2024.</p>
	4.3	<p>Foster innovative thinking and approaches to research integrity by consulting, developing and leading work to build the UK's focus on innovation in integrity</p>	<p>Our work on the implications of artificial intelligence, and on articulations of rigour (see 2.2) will encourage different approaches to research integrity, and our work on indicators (see 3.2) will develop innovative ways to discuss and understand research integrity.</p>