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Minutes of the UK Committee on Research Integrity Business meeting 27 January 2025

Time: 15:00 – 16:00

Location: Springer Nature, 4 Crinan St, London N1 9XW

Attendees	
Andrew George (Co-chair)	Jil Matheson
Rachael Gooberman-Hill (Co-chair)	Maria Delgado
Jane Alfred	Jeremy Watson
Nandini Das	Tolulope Ayanbola, UK Committee on Research Integrity Strategy Advisor
Louise Dunlop	Clare Marchment, UK Committee on Research Integrity Senior Advisor
Ian Gilmore	Irene Fernow, UK Committee on Research Integrity Secretariat Lead
Chris Graf	Elizabeth Saunders, UKRI Senior Strategy Advisor
Ralitsa Madsen (virtual)	Rebecca Veitch, UKRI Head of Research Integrity Strategy

1. Welcome

- 1.1. The UK Committee on Research Integrity ('the Committee') was welcomed to the business meeting.
- 1.2. Apologies were noted from Miles Padgett. Ralitsa Madsen attended the meeting virtually.
- 1.3. The co-chairs extended their congratulations to Nandini Das, who received an OBE in the New Year's Honours List.
- 1.4. The meeting objectives were to:
 - ratify next steps for ongoing workstreams
 - discuss and approve plans for the 2025 annual statement

1.5. Members were reminded that the minutes of the 1 October 2024 Committee meeting were approved at the monthly meeting on 21 November 2024.

1.6. The action log from the 1 October 2024 meeting was reviewed.

Assigned to	Action	Status
Committee	The Committee to publish their AI discussion document on the UK Committee on Research Integrity website.	Complete
Committee	Committee to write to UKRI to ask about, and to offer their insights into, the UKRI guidance 'Use of generative artificial intelligence in application preparation and assessment' that was published on 23 September 2024.	Complete
Members	Members to reflect on structure and additional data and evidence requirements to inform the annual statement.	Complete
Secretariat	Secretariat to produce a project plan for production of the UK Committee on Research Integrity 2025 Annual Statement for publication summer 2025.	Complete
Secretariat	Secretariat to plan and commission analysis of published Research Integrity Annual Statements.	Complete
Members	Members to share examples of any known case studies in relation to EDI and research integrity.	Complete

2. Future governance

2.1. The Committee's initial three-year term concludes in May 2025 and plans are being considered to extend this.

2.2. The Committee noted key priorities for the year ahead, including the planned publication of recommendations from the Committee's AI working group in Summer 2025 and its Poor Research Practice and Research Misconduct working group in early 2026.

2.3. Members considered key areas for impact in 2025, highlighting the importance of describing the landscape for research integrity in the UK and planned work in parallel with the Research Integrity Concordat Signatories (RICS) Group to launch and facilitate implementation of the refreshed Concordat to Support Research Integrity.

Action:

- The Committee to engage with the RICS group to implement and maximise the impact of the Concordat within the sector.

3. Publishers' discussion

- 3.1. The Committee reflected on the beneficial round-table discussion with publishers held earlier in the day. Members valued the opportunity to convene this conversation, and the openness and enthusiasm of those who attended.
- 3.2. Members agreed to thank publishers and explore future collaboration with the publishing industry, including opportunities to add value by facilitating cross sector dialogue.

Actions:

- Members to reflect on opportunities for cross-sector engagement with the publishing industry, to be tabled for discussion at a future Committee meeting.

4. Annual Statement 2025

- 4.1. The Committee's Annual Statement 2025 is due to be published during the summer. The Committee were updated on key milestones, including collation of data and evidence which is being overseen by the annual statement data working group.
- 4.2. The Committee were informed that Research Consulting has been appointed to conduct the analysis of annual statements on research integrity for Higher Education Institutes (HEIs), Independent Research Organisations (IROs) and government bodies. Members were further informed that the Jean Golding Institute at the University of Bristol have been commissioned to undertake analysis of Retraction Watch data.
- 4.3. Members agreed that a clear message about why research integrity matters, alongside the landscape description already discussed, would be vital. This could be well-supported by case studies (for which there is an [open call](#) at the moment).

5. Next steps for workstreams

- 5.1. The Committee discussed progress across its workstreams and considered next steps.

Artificial Intelligence (AI)
- 5.2. AI working group members informed the Committee that the intermediary stakeholder engagement has now concluded. Members reflected on the fast-changing nature of AI and noted need for guidance and reassurance to the sector.
- 5.3. The working group advised that the Concordat to Support Research Integrity principles still provide a strong foundation for the sector, even in light of emerging

technology; and that reinforcing this in the Concordat re-launch can give certainty to the sector at a time of fast-paced change.

- 5.4. Members were informed that the AI working group and working group on Poor Research Practice and Research Misconduct co-chairs would convene on Monday 27 January 2025 to share insights and discuss synergies across the Committee's workstreams.

- 5.5. Working group findings and recommendations will be brought to the Committee for discussion in the near future.

Poor Research Practice and Research Misconduct

- 5.6. Members were informed that work with [RAND Europe](#) to deliver the '[Addressing research misconduct in the UK](#)' tender was progressing well. The commission will provide evidence on UK Higher Education (HEIs) research sector's governance of research misconduct, explore international models for managing research misconduct in HEIs and explore models that include assurance and regulation in UK sectors outside of HEIs.

- 5.7. An early output from the international models for managing research misconduct workstream, describing 24 international country approaches will be published in in the second quarter of the year.

- 5.8. The cross sector working group are providing strategic oversight and informing progress at key stages of implementation on a bi-monthly basis. The next working group meeting is due to take place 28 February 2025, when members will discuss sector mapping and planned engagement across a diverse sample of 30 HEIs, across all the UK nations.

- 5.9. The outcome of this work will inform future Committee recommendations in relation to UK governance of poor research practice and research misconduct.

Research Excellence Framework (REF)

- 5.10. Working group members are engaging with the REF team, noting the need for constructive and ongoing dialogue to provide feedback and insights from the HEI sector for the consideration in development of REF guidance and process. The Committee reflected on the need to acknowledge current pressures and financial challenges across the sector within the development of the REF to ensure that new guidance and requirements are welcomed as positive enablers for Higher Education Institutions (HEIs).

Concordat to Support Research Integrity ('the Concordat') refresh

- 5.11. The Research Integrity Concordat Signatories Group are carrying out the 5-year refresh of the Concordat. The Committee's co-chairs are chairing the process for the Group, and a revised document will be launched in early Spring 2025, with supporting communications materials. Compliance with respect to any changes, for instance in reporting by research-conducting organisations, will start from January 2026.

6. Any other business

- 6.1. There was no other business raised.

7. Standing items

7.1. Equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) considerations

- *ways of working*: The Committee reflected on the ways of working survey, noting opportunities to refine communication and workload planning across diverse preferences.
- *external facing work*: The Committee reflected on how EDI considerations have been embedded in all aspects of external facing work, highlighting diverse HEI sampling within the 'Addressing research misconduct in the UK' tender as a positive example.

7.2. Communication matters arising

Following discussions over the course of the day, members agreed that there would be value in tabling a future discussion about Committee key messaging to the sector, including in relation to the hosting of the Concordat.

Action:

- The Committee to table future discussion about Committee key messaging to the sector.

7.3. Reflections on the meeting, ways of working

The UK Committee on Research Integrity's January 2025 meeting was held at the Springer Nature Campus, hosted by Chris Graf, Committee Member and the Research Integrity Director and Leader of the Editorial Excellence Team at Springer Nature.

The Committee reflected on ways of working, with emphasis placed on the importance of ensuring clear, achievable impact for the sector. Supporting the alignment of cross sector initiatives and developments also continues to remain a priority.

The Committee discussed engagement with the Research Integrity Concordat Signatories (RICS) Group, focusing on the importance of structured support and collaboration.

Members reflected on the extensive work undertaken by the AI and Research Misconduct workstreams. The Committee considered challenges of sensitively navigating complexity, whilst ensuring work is timely and relevant in a rapidly developing landscape and within resource constraints faced by HEIs.

The Committee was delighted to be joined by key representatives from major academic publishers for a segment focussing on publishing and research integrity. The Committee found the session to be particularly insightful, appreciating the open exchange of ideas.

The meeting concluded with reflections on informing the sector through insights and leadership. There was consensus on the importance of framing research integrity discussions within the context of the current unsettled nature of the HEI landscape nationally and internationally, ensuring that integrity remains at the core of sectoral strategies. The Committee remains committed to fostering collaboration, reducing bureaucratic burdens, and supporting coordination of RI provisions across research institutions and publishing entities.

8. Close, and date of next meeting

- 8.1. Members of the committee were thanked for their time and positive contributions. The next committee meeting will be held on 30 April 2025.

Actions

- The Committee to engage with the RICS group to implement and maximise the impact of the Concordat within the sector.
- Members to reflect on opportunities for cross-sector engagement with the publishing industry, to be tabled for discussion at a future Committee meeting.
- The Committee to table future discussion about Committee key messaging to the sector.