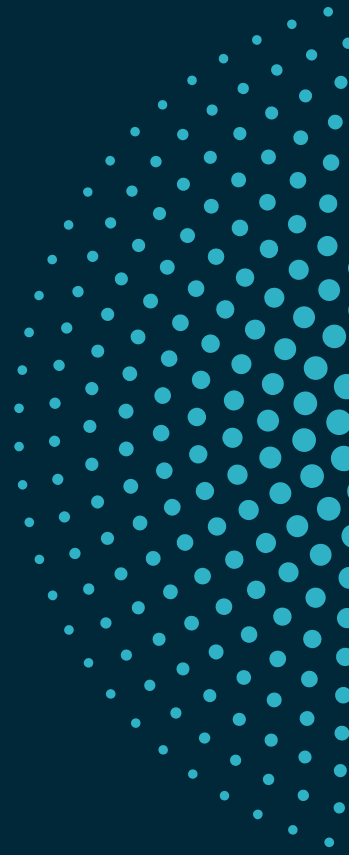
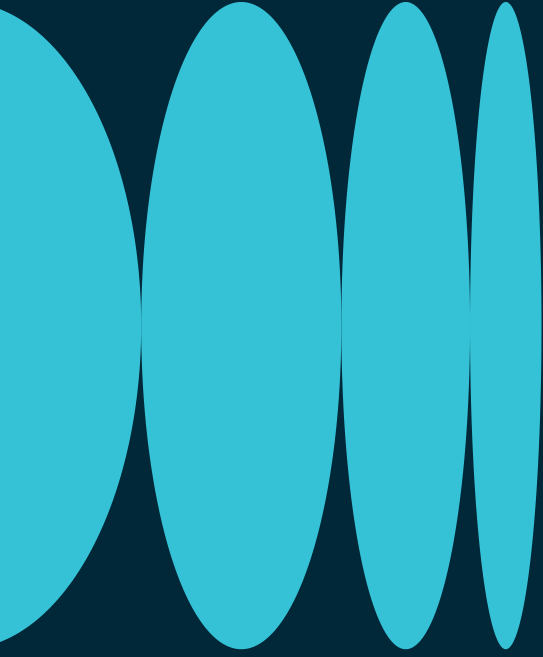


Review of annual statements on research integrity

July 2025

Commissioned by The UK Committee on Research Integrity and the
Research Integrity Concordat Signatories Group



Executive Summary

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Executive Summary (1/3)

This report, commissioned by the UK Committee on Research Integrity and the Research Integrity Concordat Signatories (RICS) Group, reviews annual statements on research integrity produced by UK higher education institutions (HEIs), government departments and other research organisations for academic years 2022/23 and 2023/24. Building on a [previous report](#) published in 2023 and focusing on annual statements produced between academic years 2019/2020 and 2021/2022, this iteration reflects a maturing research integrity landscape across the UK and highlights a series of emerging trends and initiatives through a comprehensive collection of case studies.

Our analysis suggests that research integrity is understood not as a standalone compliance requirement but as an integral component of broader research excellence and institutional culture. We highlight the following key findings:

- 1. The share of annual statements available to analyse over time is broadly consistent, with 78% found for 2022/23 and 75% for 2023/24.** These figures are consistent with the findings of the [2023 report](#), demonstrating sustained engagement with the UK Concordat to Support Research Integrity. As there is currently no requirement to continue to make publicly available annual statements from previous years, this report provides a snapshot of the annual statements available online by mid-2025, rather than a narrative of what institutions may have published over time.
- 2. Adoption of the annual statement template was 65% in 2023/24, compared to 46% in 2022/23.** This template was commissioned to the UK Research Integrity Office (UKRIO) by the RICS Group in 2022, to support institutional reporting efforts. Although adoption is not mandatory, the increased use of the template has led to higher consistency in the subjects covered in annual statements compared to previous years.
- 3. A majority of higher education institutions report on misconduct allegations and investigations. Consistent with the 2023 report, the top three reported reasons for allegations of research misconduct are: failure to meet legal, ethical and professional obligations, followed by plagiarism and misrepresentation.**
- 4. Annual statements highlight good practice across HEIs in established areas of research integrity provision.** Practices are often tailored to local contexts; however, there is limited evidence of monitoring or evaluation of effectiveness.
 - HEIs increasingly recognise how research culture at different levels affects research integrity** (e.g. team, department, division, whole institution). Many institutions are integrating culture-focused initiatives into institutional strategic goals and creating dedicated leadership roles. Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) are seen as integral components of this discussion.

Executive Summary (2/3)

- **Research integrity training provision varies significantly in format, delivery and mandatory requirements.** Specifics differ by HEI; however, training is typically required for students and new staff. Expectations for established staff vary more widely, although training is most frequently available regardless of seniority. Evaluation of training available focuses primarily on satisfaction and uptake rather than the impact of the training delivered.
- **Formal monitoring and evaluation of the impact of research integrity activities are uncommon across institutions.** Annual statements primarily report on activities undertaken rather than assessing outcomes or effectiveness.
- **HEIs demonstrate ongoing efforts to improve practices by learning from experience.** The analysis of annual statement highlights mechanisms like feedback loops on training and ethics processes or the UKRIO self-assessment tool, as well as the socialisation of insights through roles like Research Integrity Champions.

5. HEIs are actively addressing new challenges and developments, in response to a continually changing external landscape.

- Structures, incentives and practices are developing to support transparency and reproducibility beyond open access to publications, with growing integration of FAIR data principles and diverse research outputs.
- The key role of professional services, including technicians, in supporting research integrity is increasingly recognised and leveraged through collaborative structures and integration into integrity initiatives.
- Governance structures, policies and training are developing to support provision around trusted research and international collaboration, often involving inclusion in institutional risk registers, dedicated expertise, and engagement with national resources.
- Dedicated working groups, policy frameworks, cross-institutional collaborations and adaptations of ethics review processes are being put in place to promote responsible use of generative artificial intelligence, with an emphasis on its use in research and scholarly communication.

6. Annual statements produced within government are more streamlined and follow a customised template, which differs from the one used by HEIs. The differences across government departments mean that flexibility is key when supporting research integrity in this context. Importantly, research integrity expectations within government departments consider both internal researchers and external contractors. A distinguishing feature of annual statements produced within government is that these are all available via a single webpage on the UK Government's website, managed by the Government Office for Science.

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7. Annual statements developed by research organisations other than HEIs are typically concise and cover topics similar to those covered by HEIs. This may arise from the fact that the organisations for which we found annual research integrity statements are mostly research-focused, so their thinking is likely to share some commonality with HEIs. Annual statements from non-HEI research organisations are often difficult to locate. This stems from the significant diversity in their management structures, which is reflected in their widely varying website designs and information architecture.

This analysis of annual statements on research integrity reveals a maturing landscape with continued improvement across the UK research ecosystem. Our review highlights several key developments in interconnected areas.

Integrating research integrity into institutional culture: Research integrity is increasingly embedded within broader institutional priorities rather than treated as a standalone area for compliance. This is evidenced by:

- The creation of senior leadership positions focused on research culture and integrity
- Integration of research integrity within strategic objectives
- Recognition of research integrity's contribution to research excellence
- Collaborative approaches involving diverse stakeholders

Strengthening the role of professional services: Professional services are playing an increasingly vital role in fostering research integrity. This is evidenced by:

- Cross-functional teams providing specialised expertise
- Dedicated events and training programmes building awareness and skills
- Recognition of technical staff contributions through initiatives like the Technician Commitment
- Communities of practice facilitating knowledge sharing across disciplinary boundaries

Responding to an evolving landscape: Institutions are developing proactive approaches to address a rapidly evolving landscape. This is evidenced by:

- Governance frameworks and risk management for international research security
- Ethical frameworks and working groups addressing AI applications in research
- Tailored policies reflecting diverse institutional contexts and needs

By building on the solid foundation evident in these annual statements, UK institutions can continue to demonstrate leadership in research integrity while adapting to a rapidly evolving landscape. The future of research integrity in the UK rests not only on alignment with established frameworks and requirements, but on the sector's collective capacity to innovate, collaborate and embed integrity as the cornerstone of research excellence in an increasingly complex external landscape.

Thank you

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This Executive Summary is part of a report commissioned by the UK Committee on Research Integrity and the Research Integrity Concordat Signatories Group.



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