

Annual Statement on Research Integrity

Section 1: Key contact information

Question	Response
1A. Name of organisation	University of Lincoln
1B. Type of organisation: higher education institution/industry/inde pendent research performing organisation/other (please state)	Higher Education
1C. Date statement approved by governing body (DD/MM/YY)	
1D. Web address of organisation's research integrity page (if applicable)	https://www.lincoln.ac.uk/researchatlincoln/researchethicsandintegrity/
1E. Named senior member of staff to oversee research integrity	Name: Prof Karl Dayson
	Email address: kdayson@lincoln.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: Dr Stephanie Armstrong
	Email address: ethics@lincoln.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

Allegations of research misconduct can be raised directly with one of the two Named Persons for Research Misconduct – these can be found on the Research Ethics and Integrity website (<https://www.lincoln.ac.uk/researchatlincoln/researchethicsandintegrity/>). Additionally, allegations can be raised with the Research Governance Manager or the Chair of the Research Integrity and Ethics Committee.

The University conducts investigations in line with the UKRIO Procedure for the Investigation of Misconduct in Research 2023 as outlined in the University's Procedure for the Investigation of Misconduct in Research document. Any allegations will be passed to the Named Person to undertake the initial investigation and where necessary instigate and support a full investigation. The Named Person is supported by the Research Governance Manager who will act as the Research Integrity Officer as defined by UKRIO for the organisation.

The Research Integrity Officer reports on matters of integrity to the Research Integrity and Ethics Sub-Committee, which is part of the Research Innovation Committee. This meeting is held quarterly and acts as a formal record for misconduct investigations undertaken.

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.

Since the previous report a new Research Governance Manager has been appointed and has completed an evaluation of the research ethics system and policy. This has resulted in an update to the ethics application system and process and an updated policy. Alongside this a research ethics training suite has been developed and is in the process of being rolled out. This training will cover research ethics and misconduct as well as a practical guide to completing an ethics application form. In addition, training is delivered 6 times per year as part of the Doctoral School induction for new Post-graduate Research students.

The Research Policy and associated standard operating procedures have been updated and renewed. As part of the redevelopment of the ethics application system a new internal ethics portal page has been developed ensuring that all relevant documentation/policy/guidance documents are easily accessible to both staff and students.

Whilst the University adheres to the UKRIO Procedure for the Investigation of Misconduct in Research there is a need for institutionally specific policy and guidance documents. A new policy for research misconduct is under development, alongside relevant standard operating procedures and guidance documents. Once approved this will be added to the document repository on the portal page.

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.

Reflecting on the action plan from the previous statement a major part of the work undertaken was the review and redevelopment of the ethics platform (LEAS) including updated policy and guidance documents. Training has been extensively

reviewed, and new training packages are underway. During the redevelopment of the ethics system, we undertook extensive outreach with system users including academic staff, PGR students and professional services staff. A new audit process has been developed and incorporated into the research ethics policy and processes.

Action Plan for 2025/2026:

- Implement and review new audit process for ethics applications
- Complete UKRIO Self-Assessment tool for the Concordat to Support Research Integrity V3.0
- Use self-assessment tool to inform new Misconduct in Research Policy and Procedure.
- Develop guidance and standard operating procedures for the investigation of research misconduct.
- Continue to develop relevant training programmes for researchers, reviewers and for misconduct investigation.
- Introduce monthly drop-in sessions for researchers and students – including both online and face-to-face options.

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.

Misconduct allegations can be raised through whistle blowing or referral from school leadership. An initial investigation is undertaken to determine whether a full investigation is needed. The results of any investigation will be referred to the Head of School/Line Manager or to PPC as relevant.

A gap has been identified as no formal policy for research misconduct is in place other than the adoption of the UKRIO Procedure for the Investigation of Misconduct in Research. This can result in a lack of clarity for staff/students raising a concern. It is important that the institution develops a clear policy and process that will offer transparency and encourage individuals to report their concerns. It is recommended that Schools identify senior academics who can undertake relevant training to be able to carry out misconduct investigations and when needed chair the misconduct panel, when the Named or Alternate Named person is not available or where there is a conflict of interest.

3B. Information on investigations of research misconduct that have been undertaken

Please complete the table on the number of **formal investigations completed during the period under review** (including investigations which completed during this period but started in a previous academic year). Information from ongoing investigations should not be submitted.

An organisation's procedure may include an initial, preliminary, or screening stage to determine whether a formal investigation needs to be completed. These allegations should be included in the first column but only those that proceeded past this stage, to formal investigations, should be included in the second column.

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				
Multiple areas of concern (when received in a single allegation)				
<i>Other*</i>	1	1	0	0
Total:	2	1	0	0

***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.**

Misuse of student information/login details to extract research data.