University of Oxford annual statement on research integrity (2024)

As set out in its Strategic Plan (2018–2024), the University of Oxford is committed to enabling ambitious research of exceptional quality. The University acknowledges that research excellence must be underpinned by the highest standards of ethics and integrity, to ensure that research is reliable and trustworthy. The principles of honesty, rigour, collegiality, trust, transparency, and accountability are key to maintaining research integrity at Oxford. The University's commitment to research integrity is reflected and embedded in its institutional systems and culture and an ongoing programme of review and improvement. Support for research practice, of which research integrity is a key component, is one of three core pillars of the University's programme of support for research culture.

The University supports and abides by the principles of the UK Concordat to Support Research Integrity, which requires that all employers of researchers prepare and publish a short annual statement on research integrity. Past annual statements are publicly accessible from the Research Integrity and Practice web page.

This statement was prepared for the University's Research and Innovation Committee to fulfil this obligation, to summarise related policies, training, and guidance available to support researchers and to report on activity and initiatives related to research integrity undertaken across the University in calendar year 2024. The statement was drafted and coordinated by Research Services, with contributions from Human Resources, the Proctors' Office, Bodleian Libraries, the Researcher Hub, Divisional Research offices, and IT Services.

Section

1: Key contact information

Question	Response
1A. Name of organisation	University of Oxford
1B. Type of organisation	Higher Education Institution
1C. Date statement approved by Research and Innovation Committee (on behalf of Council)	6 March 2025
1D. Web address of organisation's research integrity page	https://researchsupport.admin.ox.ac.uk/governance/integrity
1E. Named senior member of staff to oversee research integrity	Professor Patrick Grant, Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Research) – for research integrity email: patrick.grant@admin.ox.ac.uk Gill Aitken, Registrar – for allegations of research misconduct email: registrar@admin.ox.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: Tanita Casci, Director, Research Strategy and Policy Unit email: tanita.casci@admin.ox.ac.uk

2A. Description of current systems and culture

i.   Governance of research integrity at the University of Oxford

The Research and Innovation Committee, chaired by the Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Research, and which reports directly to Council, has central responsibility for advising on policies which promote research integrity (also termed good practice in research). Its members include senior academic representatives from all four Academic Divisions, from Colleges, as well as student representatives. It has delegated responsibility to approve, on behalf of Council, the annual statement of compliance with the UK Concordat to Support Research Integrity.

The Registrar is the senior named officer within the University with designated responsibility for responding to allegations of misconduct in research. The Director of the Research Strategy and Policy Unit (Research Services) is currently named as a contact for those wishing to raise, in confidence, concerns about the conduct of University research, before any formal allegation is made.

The University's research ethics policy requires that all research involving human participants and personal data be subject to appropriate ethics review. In the case of clinical trials or research involving National Health Service (NHS) patients, ethics review and approval must be provided via the NHS Research Ethics Committees. Other research involving human participants and personal data is reviewed via processes overseen by the Central University Research Ethics Committee (CUREC), which reports annually to Research and Innovation Committee, and by CUREC's sub-committees.

The University of Oxford's animal use policy requires that anyone involved in research that includes the use of animals is proactive in pursuing refinement, reduction, and replacement in procedures involving live animals wherever possible. In addition, all researchers and animal care staff must ensure they engage fully in the approved ethical process of review and monitoring of animal-based research. The Animal Care and Ethical Review Committee (ACER) is required to report annually to Council on all activities concerned with research management and compliance with licensing.

The Research Practice Subcommittee, co-chaired by Professor Susanna-Assunta Sansone, the Academic Lead for Research Culture (Research Practice) and Dr Tanita Casci, Director, Research Strategy & Policy Unit, is responsible for overseeing initiatives and policies to strengthen research culture across the University as this relates to research practice.

ii.   Policies, systems, and support

The Concordat to Support Research Integrity requires the University to have clear policies, practices and procedures relating to research integrity. A summary of the University's related policies is included as Appendix A. These policies are subject to ongoing review.

The Academic Integrity in Research: Code of Practice and Procedure sets out the University's expectations and standards for research conduct for all its staff, students and anyone using the University's premises, facilities or funding for their research. The Code (available via the Human Resources website and the University's webpages on Research Integrity and Practice) also provides the University's definition of misconduct in research and sets out the formal procedure which will apply in the event of suspected misconduct in research. This procedure includes the timelines that will be followed when formal allegations are assessed and investigated. Within the University, individuals are encouraged to challenge misconduct or poor practice in research and, before making a formal allegation of misconduct in research, to discuss concerns within their department or faculty as appropriate.

Sources of advice and support on good practice for University members include:

- o   Supervisors
- o   College senior tutors
- o   Directors of graduate studies
- o   Heads of Department
- o   Research ethics committees

- o Research Services, via the Research Strategy and Policy Unit, the Research Practice Team, and the Research Governance, Ethics and Assurance Team
- o UK Research Integrity Office, of which the University is a subscribing member.

iii.   Training and development

Research integrity training is compulsory for all University research staff and students.

Online research integrity training (licensed from the company Epigeum) provides an introduction to research integrity.

The core introductory research integrity course has been designed to support researchers from all disciplines through some of the key issues that need to be considered when planning, conducting, and reporting research. The core course is compulsory for research students, either on graduate taught courses or studying for research degrees. There is a concise refresher version of the course available which is suitable for more experienced researchers, e.g. postdoctoral researchers and established academic staff.

Other supplemental modules are available (which only apply to certain types of research) covering:

- o Research involving human participants
- o Research involving animals
- o Conflicts of interest
- o Intellectual property
- o Export controls

Separate training courses in avoiding plagiarism and harassment and bullying are also available, as is online accredited training in Good Clinical Practice and other training for clinical researchers.

All of these courses are freely available to any University of Oxford staff or student member and are widely promoted to researchers and students by Research Services, the University's ethics committees, Divisions, departments, faculties, and Doctoral Training Centres, including at induction and related training events. Information about the training is included within Research Support, Divisional, and departmental websites, and the research integrity courses are also signposted within ethics application forms and embedded within graduate student forms and processes.

Uptake and completion of research integrity training is monitored by the Research Practice team in Research Services. There has been an increase in the number of research staff and students completing both the online core research integrity training and the refresher training. In 2024, the updake of training is shown in Table 1 (see final column with 2023 numbers, for comparison).

Table 1. Research Integrity course (core and refresher) completion numbers in 2024

	Students	Staff	Total	(2023 total numbers)
Research Integrity core course	2,178	547	2,725	(2,487)
Research Integrity refresher course	97	716	813	(406)

A further breakdown, by Division, of staff and students taking the research integrity training is shown below, with separate tables giving the completion numbers for 2024 and 2023. Note that in the data there are candidates who only gave their college affiliation, or no division code at all, hence the slight disparity with the totals above.

Similarly, when splitting the completion numbers into divisions, there is a certain amount of double counting, as individuals may have affiliations with more than one division, and so are counted in each division, rather than biasing the numbers of one division over another.

In 2024, MSD implemented a training module tracking system which allows them to identify by email address the people in the department who have not completed the mandatory training, and allows reminders to be sent directly to those staff members. This has had a modest impact on their training completion rates so far.

Table 2. Research Integrity core course – completion numbers by unit, 2024

	Continuing Education	Gardens, Libraries Museums	Humanities	MPLS	Medical Sciences	Social Sciences	University Administration and Services	Grand Total
Staff	11	5	15	36	379	88	9	543
Students	118	8	225	651	562	605	41	2,210
Total	**129**	**13**	**240**	**687**	**941**	**693**	**50**	**2,753**

Table 3. Research Integrity core course – completion numbers, 2023

	Continuing Education	Gardens, Libraries Museums	Humanities	MPLS	Medical Sciences	Social Sciences	University Administration and Services	Grand Total
Staff	12	4	13	44	223	119	21	659
Students	123	10	385	688	587	469	67	1,649
Total	**135**	**14**	**398**	**732**	**810**	**588**	**88**	**2,308**

Table 4. Research Integrity refresher course – completion numbers by unit, 2024

	Continuing Education	Gardens, Libraries Museums	Humanities	MPLS	Medical Sciences	Social Sciences	University Administration and Services	Grand Total
Staff	28	2	12	29	602	73	5	751
Students	6	0	4	23	54	16	4	107
Total	**34**	**2**	**16**	**52**	**656**	**89**	**9**	**858**

Table 5. Research Integrity refresher course – completion numbers by unit, 2023

	Continuing Education	Gardens, Libraries Museums	Humanities	MPLS	Medical Sciences	Social Sciences	University Administration and Services	Grand Total
Staff	20	0	8	26	208	78	5	345
Students	3	1	6	11	30	10	0	61
Total	**23**	**1**	**14**	**37**	**238**	**88**	**5**	**406**

There is a wide variety of in-person training and other professional development available related to research integrity and practice (e.g. Good Clinical Practice (GCP), human research ethics, animal research ethics, research data management, open access, research methodology, experimental design, research skills training). These are organised and delivered by the University's Academic Divisions[1], Departments and Faculties, Doctoral Training Centres, Bodleian Libraries, People and Organisational Development, IT Services, Biomedical Services the Researcher Hub and Research Services.

A major focus of activity in 2024 has been the development and dissemination of a body of core online training in good research practice to be freely available to all Oxford researchers (see Section 2B for further details).

The modules, which were soft-launched in late 2024, include:

- Research Integrity, Ethics and Governance at Oxford
- Open Research Practices
- Research Design (due Spring 2025)
- Collaboration
- Data
- Authorship, Publication and Peer Review
- Engagement and Impact

The modules were co-produced via a series of workshops, by experts in the topic areas who provided guidance, review and information on existing resources. A wide communications plan to promote the courses will be carried out in 2025.

iv.   Induction

- Induction events for new research staff, organised centrally by the Researcher Hub, include a session about research integrity and good practice which is delivered by members of the Research Practice team. In 2024, 6 induction events were delivered, with 4 online and 2 in-person. Participants receive an invitation to attend within first 18 months of their contract start date, averaging at 463 per event. On average, 33 attendees attended per event (~200 per year), with average 63% attendance (as a percentage of those registered who attended).

- Termly induction events for new research staff organised by the Academic Divisions include sessions about research integrity and practice, delivered by members of the divisions with support from Research Practice team and the Research Governance Ethics and Assurance Team.

- Bespoke induction events organised by Departments and Faculties include, on request, sessions about research integrity and practice which have been delivered by members of the Research Practice Team and the Research Governance Ethics and Assurance Team.

- The Research integrity checklist, structured in relation to different aspects of research integrity, and reviewed annually, has been designed to assist supervisors and researchers not only to abide by the principles set out in the University's Academic Integrity in Research: Code of Practice and Procedure but also to engage in a broader dialogue about research integrity and good practice in research.

- The Researcher's Trailmap, distributed and promoted via the Researcher Hub (and reviewed annually), has been designed to help Principal Investigators to have structured conversations with research staff about research practice and career development. The Trailmap lists research integrity training as the first action to complete on joining Oxford.

v.   Research culture

The University's research culture programme is centred on three pillars which have been adopted as a framework for investments and communications. These are:

- Research practice: enabling researchers to do reliable, reproducible, transparent research

- Valuing contributions: recognising diverse talents, skills, outputs, and activities

- Careers: assessing research fairly, within an equitable working environment and supporting the professional development of researchers at all career stages

The pillars are necessarily interconnected and underpinning projects span more than one pillar. Examples are provided throughout this statement of the research culture activities underway to support research integrity and practice.

The University's five Research Culture Facilitators (with funding support from the Research England Culture Enhancement Fund), are based in the Academic Divisions, and their role is to support the development and implementation of the University's research culture strategy, and share learning, and best practice.

The University's RISN (Research and Innovation Support Network) has a number of communities of practice (CoPs), including the Research Culture CoP, which has a membership of over 900 research and innovation support professionals.

vi.   Sector engagement relating to research integrity and practice

The University recognises the importance of collaborating with partner institutions, at a national and international level, to facilitate networking and good practice in how to support and encourage research integrity.

- o   Members of Research Services continue to be active members of the Russell Group Research Integrity Forum, which seeks to share good practice and provide training, guidance and networking opportunities in research integrity matters. The group operates virtually as a community of practice, along with in-person meetings.

- o   The Research Integrity and Policy Lead has continued to work with the League of European Research Universities (LERU) Research Integrity Policy Group.

- o   The University has a longstanding annual subscription to the UK Research Integrity Office (UKRIO) and, via this, has access to additional training assistance, UKRIO guidance documents, a register of UKRIO advisers for misconduct investigations, and assistance in developing and enhancing University guidelines, procedures and training. UKRIO also provides confidential advice and assistance to Oxford staff and research students with questions and concerns about the design, conduct and reporting of academic research. UKRIO's popular training events are widely promoted within Oxford.

- o   Throughout 2024, members of the Research Strategy and Policy Unit were invited to participate in various national and international events about research culture and practice, to give related talks and to serve on discussion panels. As a follow up to the presentation at the International Research Culture Conference at the University of Warwick, 2023, a subsequent paper on `Putting research practice at the heart of research excellence at the University of Oxford' was published.

- o   Members of the team gave presentations on open research and research culture in Cardiff and Sheffield, at the ARMA conference, and as a member of external advisory boards such as the LMU Open Science Center.

- o   The Berlin–Oxford Autumn School on Open and Responsible Research 2024 was held in Berlin (and online) in September 2024. This week-long event welcomed over 50 researchers to train them in how to undertake open and responsible research practices, as well as how to advocate for and become open research leaders in their teams and disciplines. The programme and presentations can be found here.

- o   The University is an institutional member of the UK Reproducibility Network (UKRN) and is an active participant in the UKRN Open Research Programme, with particular engagement in the Training work package.

2B. Changes and developments during the period under review

i.   **Training and development**

One of the key pillars of the wider University programme to advance research culture is providing enhanced support for research practice, including research integrity. This work is coordinated by the new Research Practice Subcommittee working closely as part of the Research Culture programme.

A major focus of activity in 2024 has been the continuation of the development of a series of online training modules in research practice, designed to supplement and enhance existing University training available and enable researchers to conduct reliable, reproducible and transparent research. Of the seven planned modules, six were launched in 2024, with the final module to be launched in spring 2025. Fully automated reporting through Power BI dashboards has been implemented to capture tracking and feedback data on the research practice training courses.

The Narrative CV (NCV) is a structured but flexible CV format that has been rolled out across funders nationally and internationally to reward a wider range of contributions to research. Resources for completing a NCV have been co-produced with the community and are freely available.

- o   Online NCV training was delivered by the cross-institutional NCV training team and was open to University employees and students, and others on request. Since its launch in mid 2023 the training has reached >800 attendees (350 attendees in 2024). Successful learning outcomes have been demonstrated in polls run at the beginning and end of sessions: typical scores (out of 5) being an increase in awareness of NCVs from 1.7 to 3.4 and an increase in feeling prepared to write an NCV from 1.8 to 3.2.

- o   The high numbers of attendees demonstrated that this project addressed a real need and interest. Participants have come from all divisions, and included DPhil students, research staff, and established academics. The training team has had requests to hold additional sessions in departments; the Careers Service will now be coordinating termly training and offer 1:1 CV workshops to researchers; they are also trialling in-person workshops.

As part of Oxford's participation in the UK Reproducibility Research Network (UKRN), the five early-career UKRN Local Network Leads who were appointed in 2023 to champion and support open and transparent research practices across the University have strengthened their activities. The LNLs have expanded Reproducible Research Oxford (RROx), a grassroots collective of students and staff aiming to grow awareness of open research. The LNLs work collaboratively to engage and expand this community at Oxford via networking, training, and other events and activities. In 2024, this included an event for 20 people in Wytham Woods entitled "Forests of Data: Realising the Benefits of being Open and Reproducible in Research", an event with over 100 sign-ups for an afternoon discussing AI, data, and the law. Over 160 people applied for the latest Software Carpentries workshops, with capacity for 90, clearly demonstrating the need and interest in this training.

Revised and enhanced research integrity and research practice content has been included in the DPhil Supervision at Oxford (Humanities and Social Sciences) and DPhil Supervision at Oxford (Sciences) courses, available online. For those new to teaching at Oxford, this self-guided Canvas course provides focused guidance on tutorial teaching and research supervision. The course explains University structures and teaching practices, and suggests links to further resources.

The Research Administration & Management (RAM) Hub is designed as a one-stop shop for research administrators, facilitators, managers and anyone who supports researchers at Oxford. The pages contain information and signposting, from basic 'how to' guides to handy resources, including Research Practice and Research Integrity content.

An expanded version of the Research Integrity, Ethics and Governance at Oxford research practice training module was given in person to students in the Social Sciences in November 2024, titled Introduction to Virtue Ethics & Research Integrity. Another workshop on Responsible Research and Innovation is planned for MPLS in January 2025.

In the academic year 2023–2024 there were 37 iSkills workshops with 565 attendees, including a new workshop on "Preregistration and Registered Reports: What, Why, and How", which attracted over 50 attendees in total. Recent feedback has included: "It was super helpful and gave me a clear understanding of preregistration and registered reports. I also really appreciated the presenter sharing her personal experiences—they added a lot of value…. It is the most beneficial iSkills course I have ever attended." *Open Scholarship - Preregistration and Registered Reports: What, Why, and How (June 2024)*

New Research Software Engineering training is being offered by the Oxford Research Software Engineering Group - Training | Oxford Research Software Engineering Group.

ii. Clinical research and governance

The Research Governance, Ethics and Assurance Team now offer an in-person GCP for labs training session for University laboratory staff supporting clinical trials. The training will initially run 3–4 times per year. This in-person training supports the Good Clinical Practice (regulated trials) online training in CoSy, which was taken by 610 staff and 204 students in 2024.

iii. Research ethics

The new Online Ethics Application System (Worktribe) is the University's system to support the preparation, submission and review of applications to its institutional research ethics committees and brings the University into line with the digitalisation of the sector. In early July 2024, a phased rollout began to introduce the new system, which both improves administration and provides transparency for review pathways. The system was fully rolled out by the end of 2024 with all new applications now making applications via this online system. The digital workflow system offers a user-friendly interface where researchers and students can submit information relevant to their planned research project. The system also offers Research Services and Departmental Research Support Administrators a means of capturing, reviewing and processing Ethics Applications in a single space.

iv. Open research

The University's first Open Research Position Statement was published this year. It provides a framework for researchers to conduct and disseminate research in a manner that promotes the sharing and accessibility of knowledge, trust in researchers and institutions, and societal impact.

In October 2024 an institutional rights retention policy went live as part of the University's Open Access Publications Policy. Rights retention supports researchers with making their work open access via author self-archiving in a repository, by retaining the rights to their work in the face of publisher agreements that would otherwise prevent the sharing of Oxford research. Functionality exists for users to opt out if desired.

In September 2024, the UKRI Policy Changes Project completed successfully, delivering enhancements to the institutional repository, ORA (Oxford Research Archive). The project provided enhancements in the dissemination of Oxford's research outputs, seeing downloads of ORA content rise from 90k a month to over 220k a month. Additionally, the enhancements boosted provision and support for digital object identifiers (DOIs) and research data archiving.

Symplectic Elements, the University's current research information system, is configured to allow users to record their contribution to a research output via a dropdown menu as per Contributor Roles Taxonomy (CRediT). This functionality is promoted via our 'CRediT and Symplectic Elements' webpage.

In the 18 months since the launch of the service, uptake has been as follows:

- o 4,131 contribution roles recorded
- o 539 outputs with at least one contribution role recorded
- o 752 people with at least one contribution role recorded

The REF funding bodies held a consultation on the REF Open Access (OA) policy in Spring 2024. University and Divisional Open access leads collaborated to develop a draft institutional response, which included a pushback on long-form OA requirements and overall REF complexity, advocating instead for a greater focus on wider open research practices.

v.   Research data management

The divisionally based Sustainable Digital Scholarship (SDS) service became a shared service co-funded by the Bodleian and Humanities Division in 2023, forming a strategic pipeline with ORA to ensure the long-term sustainability and visibility of Oxford's research data.

Development of the Research Data Oxford site continued, building on feedback from user testing. The site is Oxford's central source of information and guidance on research data management. A new companion website was also launched: the Oxford Research Data Pathfinder. This offers a guide to storage options for live research data.

The Research File Service (RFS), which provides research data storage facilities for data volumes between 100GB and 20TB, expanded its functionality to allow web access and the ability to collaborate with external users.

The supplier contract for the digital preservation service DigiSafe was renewed for a further four years.

A custom version of the data management planning tool DMPonline was launched. This makes the tool more integrated with other Oxford services, and allows for greater tailoring of guidance for Oxford researchers.

Other institutional services for managing research data continue to be supported and developed, including the LabArchives electronic lab notebook service.

A number of Oxford RDM support staff joined the FAIRsharing Community Champions Programme.

An RDM Competency Framework for Bodleian librarians was published within the Bodleian and used as the basis on ongoing workshops. The framework lists core areas of RDM awareness for librarians to consider in their day-to-day research support work.

vi.   International research collaboration

The University has expanded its internal Trusted Research campaign during 2024, enhancing awareness and understanding across the University, incorporating high risk areas from MPLS and the Medical Sciences Division, and areas with specific risk touchpoints in Social Sciences Division. The University has provided a range of resources to support academics and departments in implementing Trusted Research risk management and related compliance, included a dedicated central support team.

In 2024, 7 Trusted Research Awareness Raising Event were carried out, with approximately 200 attendees across all the events. Similarly 4 Introduction to Research Management and Administration Workshops for Trusted Research were carried out with 85 attendees.

A new export control compliance process was piloted in 2024, and this pilot has been expanded to incorporate a wider set of academic departments. A University-wide export control policy is under review and anticipated for 2025.

The University regularly engages with the Research Collaboration and Advice Team in the Department for Science, Innovation and Technology (DSIT), participates in the National Protective Security Authority (NPSA) STEM Universities Forum, and collaborates with sector groups to share good practice.

vii.   Emerging research policy issues

In 2024, the initiative to develop a policy or guidelines for use of AI in Research was approved by the Pro-Vice Chancellor for Research. The initiative aims to support the research community to understand and make use of current AI tools within the University, ensuring appropriate balance of risks and opportunities depending on disciplinary context. The intended scope of the policy/guidance encompasses all areas of research practice; the

policy/guidance is being developed with University experts in different aspects of AI and professional staff with complementary domain expertise.

Oxford provided a response to the consultation around the update of the Concordat to Support Research Integrity, including a written submission and workshop attendance by the Research Policy and Integrity Lead.

The Research Policy and Integrity Lead, and the Director, Research Strategy & Policy Unit, also provided input to the UK Committee on Research Integrity (UKCORI) work on developing research integrity indicators through workshop attendance.

viii.   Research culture

Many projects are underway to advance research culture, including improved support for research practice. Other research culture projects include the development of a new Academic Career & Reward Framework. Led by the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Digital), the aim of the project is to improve the career paths, workload, and reward and recognition of academics (including in the areas of rigourous and responsible practice). An initial framework was approved for wider consultation by the Steering Group in late 2024, following which proposals will proceed to formal consultation.

The Vice-Chancellor's Awards are a University-wide celebration of our outstanding people. In 2024 a Research Culture award was added to recognise those who have contributed to a positive, inclusive, and equitable research culture.

2C. Reflections on progress and plans for future developments

i.   Training and development

The development of research integrity and practice training is taking place in a wider environment of greater awareness of and engagement with related issues.

The advantage of online training is that it provides University-wide access to generic introductory training. An ongoing challenge remains the ability to deliver discipline-specific training, at scale, to all researchers. Divisions have already requested extensions of online training modules to be created as in-person workshops, with research integrity as the first topic, but also extending to include other topics in the research practice programme. In response to these requests, presentations on research practice have been given to several divisions, including the Social Sciences Graduate Studies Committee, subject and outreach librarians from the Bodleian, Humanities Graduate Studies Committee, MPLS Research Committee, MSD Skills Training Committee, and the Research Staff Consultation Group.

A further challenge is presented by the systems for tracking and monitoring uptake of research integrity-related training, which is largely currently delegated to individual departments. A dashboard is in development that will improve and standardise the data and visualisation of course uptake, and will highlight to departments and divisions the extent to which staff and students have completed the courses.

ii.   Research practice survey

In 2024, a University-wide survey of research staff and students was conducted around good practice in research (including research integrity), which served to raise awareness of related policies and practices, but and also helped to shape the development of future policy, guidance and training in research practice.

The survey targeted staff and students involved in research at the University of Oxford between February–April 2024, receiving 422 full responses distributed across careers stages and divisions. The survey revealed a disparity in awareness of facets of research practice (e.g., FAIR, Trusted research) while some practices were well-known

and embraced (e.g., Open access, ORCID), but that dissemination of University resources (guidance, training) to researchers should be improved.

This survey will be run again in early 2025 in order to measure progress made in these areas as a result of improved support and training, and also to identify where there is still work to be done.

iii.   Research culture

To aid clarity and consistency of approach across the University, a research culture "toolkit" was developed to identify where gaps might exist in how culture is supported and to surface existing good practice. The toolkit is being used by the divisional Research Culture Facilitators and colleagues as a framework for providing structured support to departments and faculties, which will also aid the University's preparations for REF 2029.

The Toolkit uses a framework of Topics, and departments use a Template to collate information. Following a successful pilot phase with 8 departments from July–October 2024, the project is being rolled out to other departments during November 2024–March 2025. A summary of the project is available here and in a recent blog by the PVC-R. A workshop is being planned in June 2025 to analyse the findings and identify support mechanisms.

iv.   Support for reporting concerns

The University is keen to ensure that students and staff feel available to report concerns at the earliest stage and that they can receive advice and support. In the coming year, emphasis will be placed in our communications on the early flagging of concerns, so that they can be discussed and resolved by the most appropriate route.

3A. Statement on processes that the organisation has in place for dealing with allegations of misconduct

As set out in the Academic Integrity in Research: Code of Practice and Procedure, the Registrar is the senior officer designated within the University with responsibility for receiving and responding to allegations of misconduct in research. When such allegations involve students, the Registrar may refer these to the University Proctors for further investigation (the Proctors having responsibility for the investigation of possible breaches of University disciplinary codes and bringing charges against students accused of infringing these codes). The Registrar is supported by the Human Resources Policy Advisor and the Research Integrity and Policy Lead in operating the Procedure.

The Procedure was last updated in June 2022 and will next be reviewed in 2025.

Any concerns, complaints or allegations may also be made under the University's Public interest disclosure (whistle-blowing) Code of Practice (updated in 2022).

The Research Misconduct webpage includes details of the relevant procedures and contacts for those with questions about research integrity or those considering raising concerns.

The Harassment policy (updated in 2023) sets out the process that will apply in the event that complaints of bullying and harassment are made against University staff or students. Further information about support and advice about bullying and harassment is available at https://edu.admin.ox.ac.uk/harassment-advice (which includes information about Harassment Advisors, who are available to support staff or students who feel they have been bullied).

See information in Section 2C above about the 2024 launch of a pilot of the Report + Support tool.

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

i.   Allegations notified to the Registrar

In 2024, the Registrar received a number of allegations of misconduct in research which were considered under the Procedure set out in the above-referenced Code. These are summarised in the table below. The table does not include details of allegations received where it was either more appropriate for these to be addressed via a different process or where these were considered to be outside the scope of the Procedure.

No	Nature of alleged research misconduct	Outcome
1.	Falsification or fabrication of data	Ongoing
2.	Unacknowledged appropriation of the work of others, including plagiarism	Dismissed after preliminary review – no evidence of misconduct
3.	Failure to declare conflict of interests.	Allegations not pursued by complainant
4.	Falsification or fabrication of data	Dismissed after preliminary review – no evidence of misconduct
5.	Unacknowledged appropriation of the work of others, including plagiarism	Dismissed after preliminary review – no evidence of misconduct
6.	Falsification or fabrication of data	Dismissed after preliminary review – no evidence of misconduct
7.	Failure to follow accepted procedures, legal, professional or ethical requirements	Dismissed after preliminary review – no evidence of misconduct
8.	Failure to follow accepted procedures, legal, professional or ethical requirements	Dismissed after preliminary review – no evidence of misconduct
9.	Falsification or fabrication of data	Dismissed after preliminary review – no evidence of misconduct
10.	Various complaints including failure to follow accepted procedures, legal, professional or ethical requirements, and falsification or fabrication of data	These issues were first brought to the Registrar's attention in 2022, since when further information and clarifications have been sought. Preliminary review by an academic adviser on the basis of the papers provided by the complainant is ongoing.

ii. Allegations considered by the Proctors' Office

During 2024, the Proctors' Office investigated a number of student cases relating to *research* work submitted for examination (i.e. theses and dissertations, as well as extended 'research' projects or essays). These are summarised below.

There were six 'carry forward' cases from 2023 concluded during 2024 (cases 1–6) and two ongoing cases at the end of 2024 (cases 12 and 13).

All decisions were those of the Proctors under s35 of Statute XI: University Discipline[1] (no cases were referred to the Student Disciplinary Panel).

Allegations which are 'not upheld' are those cases regarded, after investigation, as being unfounded, poor academic practice, or not warranting disciplinary action in all the circumstances. Such cases are therefore either returned to the examiners for finalising in the normal way or students are permitted to withdraw their work and resubmit it.

No	Nature of allegation	Outcome
1.	Plagiarism	DPhil extended essay - upheld - capped resubmission
2.	Auto-plagiarism	MSc thesis - upheld - capped resubmission
3.	Plagiarism	FHS dissertation - upheld - capped resubmission
4.	Plagiarism	MSt dissertation - upheld - capped resubmission
5.	Auto-plagiarism	MSc thesis - upheld - capped resubmission
6.	Auto-plagiarism	MSc thesis - not upheld
7.	Plagiarism	MSt extended essay - upheld - capped resubmission
8.	Auto-plagiarism	MSc thesis - upheld - capped resubmission
9.	Plagiarism	MSc thesis - upheld - capped resubmission
10.	Plagiarism/ Auto-plagiarism	MSt dissertation - upheld - capped resubmission
11.	Plagiarism	MSc thesis - upheld - capped resubmission
12.	Unauthorised AI use	UGCert dissertation - ongoing
13.	Unauthorised AI use	UGCert dissertation - ongoing
In cases where the allegations of misconduct were upheld or poor research practice was identified, feedback and learning on these has been provided to the departments in question to identify concerns and assist with future training, mentoring, and induction processes for researchers.		

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[1] https://governance.admin.ox.ac.uk/legislation/statute-xi-university-discipline-0#collapse1556056

Appendix A

Policies and procedures for supporting and promoting research integrity

The University's Academic Integrity in Research: Code of Practice and Procedure (last updated in 2022, scheduled for review in 2025) sets out the University's expectations and standards for research conduct for all its staff, students and anyone using the University's premises, facilities or funding for their research. This Code also includes the University's definition of misconduct in research and the procedure which will apply in the event of suspected misconduct in research.

The Code states that it operates in conjunction with a range of other University policies, procedures and codes of practice relating to research integrity. These include the following:

- Research ethics policy
- Policy on the use of animals in scientific research
- Policy and procedure on conflict of interest
- Public interest disclosure (whistle-blowing) code of practice
- Research data management policy
- Open access publications policy
- Financial regulations
- Intellectual property policy
- Harassment policy
- Anti-bribery policy
- Anti-fraud policy
- Information security policy
- Data protection policy
- Export controls and research collaborations guidance
- Safeguarding code of practice
- Security sensitive research guidance

These policies are subject to ongoing review to reflect changes in legislation, regulatory and funder requirements as well as evolving research practice.