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## Annual Statement on Research Integrity 2024-25

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### Section 1: Key contact information

Question	Response
<b>1A. Name of organisation</b>	University of Dundee
<b>1B. Type of organisation:</b>  <b>higher education institution/industry/independent research performing organisation/other (please state)</b>	Higher Education Institution
<b>1C Date approved by Governing Body</b>	TBC
<b>1D. Web address of organisation's research integrity page (if applicable)</b>	<a href="#">Research integrity and misconduct</a>
<b>1E. Named senior member of staff to oversee research integrity</b>	Name: Professor Lorraine van Blerk
	Email address <a href="mailto:l.c.vanblerk@dundee.ac.uk">l.c.vanblerk@dundee.ac.uk</a>
<b>1F. Named member of staff who will act as a first point of contact for anyone wanting more information on matters of research integrity</b>	Name: Dr Ann M. Brown
	Email address: <a href="mailto:A.M.Brown@dundee.ac.uk">A.M.Brown@dundee.ac.uk</a>

## 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

#### Policies and systems

The University of Dundee is committed to maintaining high standards of research integrity and fostering a positive research culture across all schools and disciplines. This commitment is supported by a comprehensive framework of policies, guidance, training, and oversight mechanisms. The University's approach ensures that researchers are aware of the standards, values, and behaviours expected of them throughout their careers, from postgraduate students to senior academic and research related staff.

The institution maintains a comprehensive framework of research policies designed to uphold high standards of research integrity. This includes a clearly defined [research policy roadmap](#) that outlines review cycles, ownership, and responsibilities for each policy. The roadmap ensures that all researchers have access to up-to-date guidance, supports consistent application across schools, and facilitates integration with broader institutional governance processes. These policies are reviewed and updated to remain aligned with funder requirements, sector best practice, and the [Concordat to Support Research Integrity](#). Oversight of these policies is provided by the Research Governance and Policy Sub-Committee (RGPSC), which serves an advisory and monitoring role within the broader university governance structure.

Data governance has been strengthened, with initiatives such as the implementation of research data storage allocation frameworks and centralisation of data records in the institutional repository (Pure), ensuring clear responsibilities for data management across schools and projects.

#### Communications and engagement

Policies, procedures, and guidance are communicated effectively through multiple channels. These include training sessions, guidance documents, policy summaries, workshops, and the establishment of SharePoint sites to consolidate resources. The Research Integrity Leads play a key role in disseminating information and supporting researchers in understanding compliance requirements.

The University is an active member of the Scottish Research Integrity Network (SRIN), which it co-founded with the University of Edinburgh, and UKRIO. The Convenor of the RGPSC is the Chair of the UKRIO Advisory Council and a member of the Board of Trustees. The University Research Integrity Network and Research Integrity Leads play a central role in disseminating information and supporting researchers in understanding compliance requirements.

Engagement is further supported through initiatives such as the Image Twin pilot, an AI-based platform to detect image duplications, which has been promoted across schools to encourage best practice in research outputs. Guidance for AI use in research is also being developed and shared, ensuring clarity on responsible AI adoption.

Postgraduate and early-career researchers are supported through targeted training, mentoring, and engagement with supervisors, while senior staff are encouraged to model best practice and foster environments where research integrity is valued and openly discussed. Succession planning for key roles, including Trusted Research and AI Working Group leadership, is undertaken to ensure continuity and maintain effective oversight.

### ***Research Integrity Training***

Training in research integrity is a key element of the University's approach to supporting researchers at all career stages. All new postgraduate researchers and staff are introduced to the Code of Good Practice in Research and the principles of the Concordat to Support Research Integrity during induction. Online training modules developed with the UK Research Integrity Office (UKRIO) are available to all researchers, providing guidance on responsible authorship, data management, ethics approval, and good research practice.

The Doctoral Academy provides researcher development training through workshops, webinars, and self-directed learning modules. These opportunities complement school-level initiatives and support postgraduate researchers and early-career academics in developing skills in research integrity, ethics, and professional development.

The University actively promotes a positive research culture through leadership, mentoring, and a range of training opportunities. This includes dedicated research integrity training and access to UKRIO resources to reinforce good practice. Reflective tools such as the [Dilemma App](#) are used to encourage discussion and awareness of integrity issues.

Training completion is monitored at School level, with Associate Deans for Research overseeing local compliance. Ongoing improvements to both the content and delivery of training are guided by user feedback and developments across the national research integrity landscape.

### ***Research Integrity Leads and Advisors***

Each School has a designated Research Integrity Lead who acts as the primary point of contact for confidential and impartial advice on integrity-related matters. This includes guidance for staff and postgraduate researchers on the responsible conduct of research, as well as support for individuals who may be considering raising a research-misconduct concern. Larger Schools have Research Integrity Groups (RIGS) which include additional Research Integrity Advisors.

The Research Integrity Leads and Advisors from all Schools form the University's Research Integrity Network. The network meets several times a year under the coordination of the RGPSC and collaborates throughout the year via a shared Teams site. It provides a

confidential and informal forum for discussing emerging issues, seeking peer advice and sharing best practice. This supports a consistent and effective application of research integrity policies across Schools.

Research Integrity Advisors complement this network by providing expert advice on specialist areas such as data management, ethical approval, and authorship. Ongoing work continues to maintain the cohort of Leads and Advisors and to strengthen collaboration and communication across Schools.

### **Culture, development and leadership**

The University's commitment to integrity is embedded within its wider research culture. Senior leaders, including Associate Deans (Research), Heads of School, and senior academics, promote responsible conduct and transparency through example and mentorship.

Research staff and postgraduate researchers are supported through formal mentoring schemes, peer networks, and research culture initiatives that encourage discussion of integrity-related challenges. Succession planning for key integrity and compliance roles, including Trusted Research and AI governance, ensures the sustainability of oversight and leadership within the institution.

### ***Other Engagement***

The University maintains active engagement with external bodies and networks to support continuous improvement in research integrity. It remains an active participant in the UK Research Integrity Office (UKRIO) network, drawing on their guidance, case studies, and webinars to inform institutional policy and training. Representatives of the University attend regional and national research integrity meetings and contribute to sector consultations where appropriate.

The institution also collaborates with partner institutions and funding bodies to share best practice, particularly in areas such as responsible use of AI, research data management, and open research. This engagement ensures that the University's policies remain aligned with national standards, funder expectations, and the evolving research integrity landscape.

### **Monitoring and reporting**

Monitoring and reporting on research integrity activities are coordinated through the RGPSC, which reports to the University Research Committee (URC). The RGPSC oversees institutional compliance with integrity policies, monitors casework trends, and tracks the delivery of training and guidance.

Oversight of research integrity is supported by the RGPSC and aligned committees, including the University Research Ethics Committee, TASC Research Governance and Oversight Committee (clinical research), and Welfare and Ethical Use of Animals Committee. The University maintains mechanisms for tracking research integrity cases, with initiatives underway to implement a centralised reporting system that will record concerns from initiation through resolution. Regular updates on policies, audits, inspections, and compliance matters are provided to the RGPSC, ensuring transparency, accountability, and continuous improvement.

A centralised case-tracking system is being developed to strengthen transparency, record management, and institutional learning from integrity-related matters. Regular updates on compliance, policy review, and training activity are reported to the RGPSC and URC to ensure continuous improvement and accountability.

As a subscriber to PubPeer, the University uses the platform to track and review any post-publication concerns about its research outputs. Trends and issues detected through these monitoring processes inform training, policy updates, and guidance provided to researchers.

## **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.

The University strengthened systems and culture supporting research integrity, reflecting ongoing alignment with the Concordat to Support Research Integrity. Key developments have focused on improving policy clarity, increasing engagement with training, and enhancing institutional mechanisms for assurance and accountability.

Policy development and review remained a core activity. The Code of Good Practice in Research is undergoing scheduled review to ensure continued alignment with UKRIO guidance and evolving national expectations. Updates are ongoing to strengthen the language around responsible authorship, the use of generative AI in research processes, and management of image integrity in publications, following guidance emerging from the RGPSC. In preparation for the implementation of the revised Concordat to Support Research Integrity (2025), the Sub-Committee and Research and Innovation Services are reviewing and updating the University's Research Misconduct Procedure during 2025–26. The updated procedure will be in place ahead of the April 2026 deadline to ensure continued alignment with national expectations and best practice.

There was continued emphasis on improving training provision. Research integrity training modules for postgraduate researchers and new academic staff were updated to include content on emerging technologies, responsible data management, and trusted research principles. Uptake of the online UKRIO-aligned research integrity course increased across Schools, and reflective discussion sessions were piloted within research groups to encourage engagement with integrity issues beyond the mandatory modules. In addition, there were targeted workshops on research ethics, authorship transparency, and responsible publication, following recommendations from the RGPSC and external funder feedback.

Significant progress was made in strengthening communication and visibility of support for integrity. The Research Policy & Governance SharePoint site was redesigned to improve usability, ensuring easier access to policies, templates, and case-handling guidance. The site now provides clearer signposting for raising concerns or seeking advice, in accordance with the University's commitment to transparency and accessibility.

The University is also developing guidance on responsible AI use in research and teaching, ensuring compliance with national frameworks and funder expectations. This was

supported ensuring that principles of accountability, transparency, and care are embedded across disciplines.

The Image Twin pilot, designed to identify image duplication or manipulation in manuscripts being prepared for submission, was extended following a positive evaluation by the RGPSC. Although the initiative strengthens preventative assurance and supports the quality and integrity of research outputs, it does not replace robust data management practices and informed human judgement.

In terms of governance, reporting mechanisms have been refined to improve monitoring of training completion rates and awareness activity. The RGPSC has enhanced the integration of reports from School Research Integrity Leads, allowing for improved identification of common challenges and targeted support.

The University also expanded its engagement with external networks and partners, including participation in UKRIO webinars and sector consultations on responsible research assessment. This engagement ensures that institutional practices remain responsive to sector developments and that lessons learned are shared effectively.

These developments demonstrate a continuing commitment to maintaining the highest standards of responsible research practice and supporting an open, inclusive, and ethical research environment.

## **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.

Progress during 2024–25 has demonstrated effective integration of policies, infrastructure, and training initiatives. The Image Twin pilot strengthened awareness of research integrity practices, while ongoing development of AI guidance reflects a proactive approach to emerging challenges. The University continues to update and revise its research policies, but the full implementation of the supporting infrastructure needed to make these policies fully effective is a longer-term goal.

Challenges identified include resourcing constraints, particularly for centralised research data storage and system implementation, and the need to maintain updated contact lists for Research Integrity Leads across all schools. The University continues to address these through structured planning and engagement with senior leadership.

Plans for 2025–26 include reviewing and refreshing a number of research policies in line with sector changes and challenges. Training will continue to be developed and delivered as is appropriate to all disciplines and career levels. Succession planning for key oversight roles will continue to ensure leadership continuity, while policy and procedural reviews will maintain alignment with the Concordat to Support Research Integrity and sector expectations.

Retirement of key staff prompted a review of the structure and remit of the RGPSC. This resulted in a proposal to transition from a formal sub-committee to a more agile standing working group with academic oversight provided through the main University Research Committee. This change aligns with wider efforts to streamline committee structures and reduce workloads while maintaining strong oversight, and it also raises the profile of

research policy and governance within the University's core research decision-making structures.

This restructuring will support ongoing initiatives, including the systematic review of research policies, the implementation of a centralised integrity case tracking system, and enhanced governance of AI and data management practices.

#### **2D. Case study on good practice (optional)**

Please describe an anonymised brief, exemplar case study that can be shared as good practice with other organisations. A wide range of case studies are valuable, including small, local implementations. Case studies may also include the impact of implementations or lessons learned.

## 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, whistleblowing, 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.

The University has established procedures to manage allegations of research misconduct, ensuring that all staff, researchers, and students have a safe and confidential environment in which to raise concerns. The primary mechanisms include the:

- [Code of policy and procedures for investigating and resolving allegations of misconduct in research](#);
- [Whistleblowing policy](#); and
- [The University's Dignity at work and study policy and procedures \(harassment and bullying\)](#)

Work to update the research misconduct policy to align with the latest UKRIO procedure for the investigation of misconduct in research is ongoing and will be completed by April 2026.

Research integrity leads and advisors act as confidential liaisons, providing guidance to those wishing to raise concerns and supporting informal resolution where appropriate. Processes are periodically reviewed to ensure alignment with the Concordat to Support Research Integrity, institutional governance requirements, and sector best practice.

The University promotes a culture where reporting concerns is supported and encouraged. Information on how to raise concerns is signposted through the University website, internal guidance, and training sessions. The University has also implemented tools and processes to identify potential integrity issues, including monitoring external platforms such as PubPeer, to detect and address any potential concerns relating to published research.

The University is in the process of developing clear guidelines on how PubPeer alerts should be assessed and managed. This work will draw on the expertise of the Research Integrity Groups and may include engagement with the wider research integrity community to ensure alignment with sector best practice.

In the academic year 2024-25 the School Research Integrity Groups addressed a number of issues following PubPeer alerts. Of the concerns raised, three were found to be genuine errors made during figure preparation. The findings were shared with the journal publishers who acted where appropriate including issuing corrections or retractions in line with their policies. No substantiated breaches of research integrity were found.

### **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				
Misrepresentation (e.g. 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>				
<b>Total:</b>				
<p><b>*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.</b></p>				