

Kingston University: annual statement on research integrity

Section 1: Key contact information

Question	Response
1A. Name of organisation	Kingston University
1B. Type of organisation:	Higher education institution
1C. Date statement approved by governing body (DD/MM/YY)	9 November 2024
1D. Web address of organisation's research integrity page (if applicable)	Concordat to Support Research Integrity - Research policies and guides - Research - Kingston University London
1E. Named senior member of staff to oversee research integrity	Name: Professor Simon Wortham, PVC Research & Impact
	Email address: S.morganwortham@kingston.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 Juliet Parry (staff) Professor Priscilla Harries, Head of Graduate Research School and Research Development (research students)
	Email address: J.Parry@kingston.ac.uk p.harries@kingston.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

All policies in this area are curated centrally by the University. Major policies are published on our external pages at the University level, whilst supplementary policies and information may be found on our external research pages. E.g. see [Academic integrity - Policies and regulations - Kingston University London](#). A great deal of information regarding research and the relevant processes is also available on our intranet pages – both those aimed at Staff and those directed at students. Research-specific policies are overseen by the University Research & knowledge Exchange Committee (RKEC). In addition to any direct or intranet communications, information is disseminated through our governance network – from RKEC to associate Deans of Research, who chair local Faculty RKE Committees, including School Directors of Research and heads of Research Centres and researcher representatives who are expected to disseminate to their constituencies and also to raise issues arising sending them upward through the committee process. We are moving to an Institute model and equivalent arrangements will be put into place through Institutes. Ethics is handled through a specific University committee reporting to RKEC and each Faculty RKEC includes the local ethics lead amongst the membership.

Research at Kingston is currently emplaced within our Faculties and supported there. This means that integrity is learned and reinforced by the local academic culture in addition to any formal training offered more widely; again, this will also be true of our KE and Research Institutes, which should further focus the culture. This enables discipline-specific elements of research behaviour to be appropriately covered. Local examples include lunchtime talk sessions to discuss different areas of academic expectation and a training cohort for 10-15 ECRs who all started at similar times, directed mainly at funding activity, but also ensuring that all basics are covered for inclusion during bidding.

Centrally, we offer a leadership academy, RISE [Kingston University launches academy to support academics and PhD students to become research leaders - News - Kingston University London](#).

This covers skills required to develop an academic career, including leadership, developing resilience and ensuring ethical leadership, but also how to contribute more widely and the benefits of doing so and mentoring skills. We periodically offer an AdvanceHE course on leadership in research to a selected cohort. We also offer a first grants scheme, which includes academic mentorship as a key component.

All new staff are invited to our biannual research induction events covering expectations on academic staff and where to find supporting resources. We offer specific integrity training through our subscription to Epigeum, which includes modules covering:

- Ethical Research
- Research Integrity
- Research Impact
- Research Methods

- Transferable Skills
- Entrepreneurship in the Research Context
- Professional Skills for Research Leaders
- Supervising Doctoral Studies

This year we are also trialling the UKRIO research integrity course. Our graduate research structured programme includes core, compulsory and optional sessions across all aspects of conducting research and the associated behaviours, up to and including a one-day workshop for those who wish to communicate via the media. We have an annual 2-week long Festival of Research each Summer, including training sessions, discussion groups, dissemination and public engagement across staff and student research interests. In 2023 our theme was sustainability.

More general training is available to all staff, primarily thorough HR. In addition to leadership skills, project management, safety and having difficult conversations, it also covers unconscious bias, anti-racism, and tackling microaggressions. We have 6 mandatory compliance training courses (Data Protection, Cyber Security, Diversity in the Workplace, Safeguarding, Prevent, Health & Safety Awareness). We have very strong community groups in a variety of protected characteristics and excellent resources relating to Race & Ethnicity, Disability & Mental Health, Gender, and LGBTQ+ on our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Learning & Development Hub.

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 major development during the last year has been our new strategy. The Town House Strategy launched in October 2022, but initiatives have been underway for up to a year preparatory to the launch. The strategy can be found at [Town House Strategy - About the University - Kingston University London](#) and sets out our vision, mission, values and goals, taking the University in a new direction. Different aspects interlock and cut across multiple activities, so both our industry engagement and education strategy streams are expected to have beneficial aspects for research. Areas of implementation activity most important to research culture include:

- Our People strategy stream to provide a collaborative, innovative, and high-performing working environment for our staff. Amongst other areas, this is reviewing many procedures, including those for recruitment, important for researchers, and improving the processes themselves and the associated guidance to streamline and improve the journey. The new appraisal framework is active with 100% completion in 2023/24. New reward and recognition benefits have been rolled out and our academic career framework (domains) has been updated.
- Our Research and Knowledge Exchange strategy stream will have impact in research, knowledge exchange and professional practice. Workshops and support to increase interconnectivity and interdisciplinarity amongst our researchers, ultimately leading to greater quality, capability, fundability and increased depth to our research excellence have continued. This activity has been supplemented by a pump-priming investment fund.

However, the main component is a move to an Institute culture for both our Research and

Knowledge Exchange activity. This is intended to improve support and incentivisation for our research culture, with greater intensification of our research connectivity and depth. Director roles have been advertised and the recruitment is advanced, moving towards active Institutes in-year. The University has purchased a Current Research Information System, which is currently in integration and configuration. This is intended to support both the Institutes and our research culture. It will provide better management information with which to direct our research and also to support and guide our researchers.

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.

The largest impact of activities last year in relation to research was the update to the academic careers' framework. The greater accessibility and legibility has received good verbal feedback and assisted in achieving the 100% appraisal completion rate. It has also driven greater engagement with research culture and funding.

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.

Summary of processes

All policies relating to staff misconduct are maintained in parallel, so that any complaint crossing boundaries can be reviewed together. Similar for student misconduct policies. Research misconduct follows a process of informal discussion to discover genuine errors where applicable, an investigative stage to discover if there is a case to answer and a full formal review phase where needed, and appeal if there is a

process query.

Policies can be found at:

Research Misconduct policy/process (Staff): [Academic Guidance 8 \(kingston.ac.uk\)](https://www.kingston.ac.uk/academic-guidance/8)

Research Misconduct policy/process (Students): [Academic regulation 7 \(kingston.ac.uk\)](https://www.kingston.ac.uk/academic-regulation/7)

Guide to Good Research Practice: [Academic Guidance 4 \(kingston.ac.uk\)](https://www.kingston.ac.uk/academic-guidance/4)

Whistleblowing Policy: [Whistleblowing Policy \(kingston.ac.uk\)](https://www.kingston.ac.uk/whistleblowing-policy)

Bullying/Harassment Policy: [Preventing and addressing bullying and harassment - Equality, diversity and inclusion - Kingston University London](https://www.kingston.ac.uk/preventing-and-addressing-bullying-and-harassment-equality-diversity-and-inclusion-kingston-university-london)

Each of these policies is reviewed regularly, usually annually over the summer. The misconduct policies and the Guide to Good Research Practice were reviewed by the University Research, Business & Innovation Committee in June 2023, the student policy having had prior review by the University Research Degrees Committee. They were then each endorsed by Academic Council at the July 2023 meeting. The Research Misconduct policy/process (Staff) is under current review to incorporate lessons learned and consider fit to best practice templates. It will be published in the same location once approved.

The senior officers responsible for oversight of cases of misconduct in relation to research are:

Dr Juliet Parry, Head of Research Systems Governance and Funding (for staff matters).

Professor Cilla Harries, Head of Graduate Research School & Researcher Development (for research students).

Safe Environment

The University makes resources relating to these areas available through multiple routes e.g. through the Staff Intranet and also via student resources, which include a report and support page explaining different areas, defining them, showing how to address them and detailing support available. The Report and Support online platform is available to both Staff and Students allows both named and anonymous reporting. There are multiple routes to report and recommendations of local discussion if someone is unsure. For example, staff can report through their line management, through their School Director for Research or Associate Dean, direct to someone further up the hierarchy, such as a Head of School or even an appropriate Senior Leadership Team member, or to HR or central research support services. The harassment contacts scheme also lists trained contacts to enable staff to identify staff in different reporting units. Regular discussion of this topic across the University makes the concepts familiar to all. Unconscious Bias training and links to the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Learning & Development Hub are included in induction for new staff, and research training which also signposts to online tools is available at points throughout the year. The University also subscribes to the UK Research Integrity Office (UKRIO), so all researchers have access to tools and resources they provide.

This is also an area of active research within the University e.g.

<https://www.kingston.ac.uk/research/research-showcase/research-case-studies/bullying/>, further familiarising the concepts within a research environment.

Key Lessons

Key lessons from recent cases are:

- Timeframes and process require revision to ensure faster outcomes, whilst still ensuring that appropriate time is allowed to generate or review the requested information
- Staff involved in allegation review need improved support and direction
- Further improvement in signposting to expectations may be beneficial

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	0	0	0	0
Falsification	0	0	0	0
Plagiarism	0	0	0	0
Failure to meet legal, ethical and professional obligations	0	0	0	0
Misrepresentation (eg data; involvement; interests; qualification; and/or publication history)	0	0	0	0
Improper dealing with allegations of misconduct	0	0	0	0
Multiple areas of concern (when received in a single allegation)	3	2	1	1
Other*	0	0	0	0
Total:	0	0	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.**

There was a single case covering a number of allegations (varied outcomes) and counter-allegations (not upheld).