

Annual statement on research integrity
Section 1: Key contact information

Question	Response
1A. Name of organisation	Northumbria University
1B. Type of organisation: higher education institution/industry/independent research performing organisation/other (please state)	Higher Education Institution
1C. Date statement approved by governing body (DD/MM/YY)	28/04/2025
1D. Web address of organisation's research integrity page (if applicable)	www.northumbria.ac.uk/research/ethics-and-integrity/
1E. Named senior member of staff to oversee research integrity	Name: Prof Louise Bracken, <i>Pro Vice Chancellor, Research and Knowledge Exchange.</i>
	Email address: Louise.bracken@northumbria.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: Ellen Cole Research Environment and Integrity Manager
	Email address: Ellen.s.cole@northumbria.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 <i>[Please insert response]</i>
1. Introduction Northumbria University recognises that the pursuit of high-quality research requires the highest standards of research integrity and ethics and the fulfilment of our responsibilities to researchers, participants in research, research users and the wider community. Therefore, the University supports, and is committed to upholding, the principles set out in the Concordat to Support Research Integrity . An integral part of that obligation is the presentation of an annual statement on research integrity to the Board of Governors for their review and approval. Compiling the annual statement offers a framework to evaluate our progress against the Concordat's commitments, and to raise the visibility of our commitment to research integrity. This is the 11th annual statement published by Northumbria University and covers the academic year 1 September 2023, to 31 August 2024. Annual statements are published on the University's

Research Ethics and Integrity [webpages](#) for visibility, accountability, and assurance on activities taken to support research integrity; and in compliance with the requirements of the Concordat.

2. Institutional Leadership and Strategy

The Pro-Vice Chancellor for Research and Knowledge Exchange (PVC R&KE hereafter) has formal responsibility for research integrity within the University and is Chair of Research Ethics Committee. The PVC R&KE is responsible for providing academic leadership on research ethics and integrity. Our publicly facing [webpages](#) provide contact details for the PVC R&KE who is the first point of contact for anyone with concerns or questions regarding research integrity and research misconduct at Northumbria. Leadership for research integrity and ethics is formally the role of the PVC R&KE. The postholder is supported in this role by the University Research Ethics Committee (REC) and its members, which the PVC R&KE Chairs, and which has responsibility for overarching policies, processes, training and monitoring research ethics and academic misconduct in research. Each Faculty has a Faculty Research Ethics Director who is a member of REC and Chairs a Faculty Research Ethics Committee which ensures that agreed policies and procedures are operationalised and socialised effectively within the context of each Faculty and disciplinary norms.

Research ethics and integrity are also a core responsibility of wider Faculty leadership roles including Departmental Ethics Leads, and the College of Ethics Reviewers (implemented in 2022/23). The College of Reviewers is a cohort of trained academic colleagues who are work loaded for undertaking the ethics review process in recognition of this essential task. Many professional service staff also have key roles to play in developing and implementing ethics and integrity policies and processes. These include the university Risk Manager, Insurance Manager, Health and Safety Manager, and the Records and Information Manager (and Data Protection Officer) who are members of the Ethics Steering Group and Research Ethics Committee.

The Research Ethics and Integrity team within the Research Policy team in Research and Innovation Services (RIS) support, enable and champion the research ethics and integrity agenda across the University. The Research Policy Team are responsible for research ethics and integrity processes and policy, researcher skills development and training, research culture activity, open research, ensuring compliance with the Concordats for Research Development and Research Integrity, as well as REF preparations and research quality activity, and our research management information systems. Bringing these areas of activity together enables the development of our research culture in which research integrity is embedded, but also encourages collaboration to fully utilise the synergies across researcher development and research integrity training.

In January 2024 the role of Research Ethics and Integrity Manager was incorporated into the role of Head of Research Culture and Integrity, a role which now leads the Research Policy Team. The Head of Research Culture and Integrity is Chair of the Ethics Steering Group, Secretary to Research Ethics Committee, and Secretary to Research Culture Committee. Bringing together these two portfolios of activity enables Northumbria to embed research integrity as a key principle of our institutional research culture see 5.2). This ensures research ethics and integrity is viewed not as an administrative function, but as a responsive practice rooted in academic life, and our behaviours and values.

3. Policies and Systems

3.1 Research Ethics Process and Policy

A key function of the research ethics team is the operational delivery and strategic management of the research ethics online review system. The team manage the triage process, which is an initial review to ensure that applications are complete and are appropriately allocated to reviewers. The triage process also ensures that applications will have the right level of ethics review according to our Ethical Governance in Research Policy. In 2023 the University committed additional resource to research ethics processes by appointing a second Research Ethics and Integrity Coordinator to support the administration of the new online research ethics review system and develop our ethics

training offer. This is a key investment in our research ethics infrastructure and demonstrates Northumbria's commitment to delivering a robust ethics review process and high-quality research ethics training.

The University's ethical review process and guidance documentation for all staff and students underwent a substantial review and subsequent revisions in 2022. These changes follow the recommendation of the Ethics Policy Review Task and Finish Group which was convened in March 2021 and completed in June 2022. A new policy document [Ethical Governance in Research Policy](#) brings together external regulatory frameworks and legislation (e.g., NHS Research Ethics Committee, Human Tissue Act, General Data Protection Regulations), as well as funder requirements (e.g., ESRC ethics framework), internal ethical review categories and processes, and good practice in research ethics. The policy is updated regularly according to any changes with internal or external policy. It also undergoes an annual review. In 2022/23 updates were made to the Ethical Governance Policy including; guidance on Due Diligence and Research with Third Parties (Section 3.10), Research with Defence or Security Applications (Section 3.12), and additional guidance on how to undertake research on extreme political views and which might be security sensitive (Section 3.14).

3.2 Research Ethics Review Process

The approval of the revised framework for ethical review was agreed in parallel with the development and purchase of a new ethical review system. This facilitated the effective alignment of policy and procedure to provide a consistent and rigorous ethical review process. Northumbria utilises an online ethical review system (Infonetica Ethics Research Manager) with ethical review categories mapped onto our Ethical Governance Policy.

This means that all applications are routed to the appropriate review panel, and to avoid any user error are triaged by the Research Ethics and Integrity team (as outlined above). The procurement of a new ethics online review system to manage ethical reviews has brought efficiency benefits for reviewers, as well as improving the robustness of our process. The software is sector leading, customisable and scalable and functions as a cornerstone for the University's Ethical Governance in Research policy. The system includes the capability to support cross Faculty/ Department review for complex-interdisciplinary projects which has been utilised this year.

During 2023/24 here have been several refinements and improvements delivered in the system, in collaboration with the Departmental Ethics Leads. These include:

- i. Revisions to '*Research Design and Aim*' sections.
- ii. Clarification of Health and Safety Risk Assessment documentation.

The ethical online review system also enables several central checks to be delivered before the ethical review commences. This assists in ensuring clear and consistent standards of research integrity. During 2023/24 these were developed and include:

- I. Governance (For any research data management, Disclosure and Barring Service, and Legal reviews).
- II. Due Diligence and Trusted Research.
- III. Insurance.
- IV. Health and Safety.

The triage process also ensures that the applicant has submitted the appropriate documentation including any consent and participant information documents.

3.2.1 Ethics Review Categories

Northumbria has a tiered ethical review approach in line with the UK Research Integrity Office (UKRIO) guidance. We use proportional and committee review, depending on the level of ethical complexity which is defined in the ethical review categories in the Ethical Governance Policy.

Proportionate review is a form of devolved review and applications are reviewed by smaller panels or single reviewers in line with external frameworks, and illustrated in the table below:

Review Category	Research Activity <u><i>Researchers, both students and staff, should reflect upon their individual project, and the potential risks to both themselves, participants, or the environment. These should be acknowledged and assessed as part of their application, and in any project proposal.</i></u>
Full Review (Committee review or Two lead reviewers and Sub-committee/ Chair moderation)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Discussion (e.g. interviews) of highly sensitive topics that may cause undue stress to participants, and researchers, including, but not exclusively: sexual behaviour, drug use; abuse or exploitation; trauma; pornography. 2. Funding from a source that may be controversial (e.g. due to the nature of the funder, or a conflict of interest). 3. Covert methods of investigation or deception. 4. Research with international partners, or research undertaken outside of the UK where there may be issues of local practice and political sensitivities. (In these instances, it will be necessary to act in accordance with the legal and ethics review requirements in the countries included in the research and demonstrate awareness of these.) 5. Access to records of personal or sensitive confidential information, including genetic or other biological information concerning identifiable individuals. 6. Intrusive interventions including the use of drugs or other substances (e.g. food, drink, placebos or drugs); and, or, procedures involving physical distress (e.g. prolonged testing) or emotional distress (e.g. stress or anxiety), that are greater than those you would encounter in everyday life. 7. Work that involves direct observation of, or participation in, activities during which it is anticipated that illegal activity, or regulatory breach is likely to occur (e.g. hunting, drug dealing, accessing the dark web, hacking). 8. Access to or collection of data, information, materials (e.g. magazines, publications, websites, and social media) relating to extremism, radicalisation or terrorism (including extreme or terror groups). 9. Funding/ sponsorship from, or the involvement of, the UK Ministry of Defence, Military (UK and International), and or, EU Security funding call. 10. The collection of data/information that might be confidential or classified (e.g. protected by the Official Secrets Act). 11. Direct testing on animals or materials derived from animals (which may require additional licencing). 12. The funding body e.g. ESRC funded projects require REC review. 13. Research with potentially vulnerable participants or groups, including people under 18 (which may require DBS clearance). 14. The collection of bodily tissue e.g. blood, saliva, urine samples from living persons (which may require licence under the HTA and additional training).
Proportionate review (reviewed by one reviewer from the College of	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Gathering data or information from human participants (e.g. via questionnaire / interview/survey/experiment/ VR). 2. Collecting personal data, i.e. name, email, home address, computer IP address, phone number etc. 3. Analysis of secondary data not in the public domain (e.g. archive material that require organisational membership).

Ethics Reviewers)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. The collection or use of information which is 'commercially sensitive'. 5. Financial inducements other than expenses and compensation for time. 6. Gathering data/information at a physical location external to Northumbria University campuses, franchised locations, and not your normal place of work. 7. Collection of samples such as plants, soils etc, that might disturb the environment or archaeological remains. 8. Individuals or groups where permission of a gatekeeper is normally required for initial or continued access to participants (e.g. NGOs, community leaders).
Research that does not normally require ethics review.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Secondary data that is in the public domain (e.g. financial data bases). 2. Systematic Reviews. 3. Meta-analyses of secondary data. 4. Black Letter Law.
Research which requires external review (e.g. HRA, NHS, MOD, NOMS).	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Research with those who might lack capacity to consent, for example, a learning disability, dementia, or cognitive impairment. 2. The use of ionising radiation. 3. Recruitment or collection of data from patients, via the NHS, and some social care settings (e.g., home, or residential care). 4. The collection of bodily tissue from deceased persons. 5. A health-related study or clinical trial of an investigational medicinal product or a medical device. 6. The prison service, offenders or participants on probation.

3.2.2 The College of Ethics Reviewers

In September 2022 a College of Ethics Reviewers was created to provide a cohort of trained, expert and supported group of colleagues that deliver consistent high-quality ethics reviews. The College is an agile group with EDI concerns managed through Departments who facilitate the number of ethical reviewers they require by considering the number and breadth of ethics applications they receive.

An agreed workload for reviewers was approved by REC of between 10 and 30 applications per year (mindful that the number and complexity of reviews will differ by Department). RIS now maintain a database of ethics reviewers and allocate reviewers according to their expertise and workload as part of a revised workflow in the new ethics online system. Research Ethics Committee regularly review the training needs of the college of reviewers and have developed a role description with agreed review expectations (e.g. timescales for review, constructive tone of review, routes to escalate any issues). The system now provides its users a reviewer profile, real time dashboards support reviewers and the new ethics review processes at Northumbria.

4 Communications and Engagement

4.1 Research Ethics and Integrity Training and Development

The appointment of an additional Research Ethics and Integrity coordinator, has created additional capacity and resource to deliver a programme of researcher development activity to support research integrity. This has included Faculty development mornings to explore roles and responsibilities in the research ethics ecosystem, develop interdisciplinary knowledge and expertise and develop new guidance and documentation (e.g. trusted research guidance and new participant documentation).

The operationalisation of the new ethics online system has been a useful tool to encourage staff and postgraduate research student attendance at training. User training has been broadened to include content on the policy framework that underpins the ethics review process.

The College of Ethics Reviewers is a key cohort of colleagues who promote a culture of research integrity across the University. During 2023/24 the Research Ethics and Integrity team have worked proactively with Faculty Research Ethics Directors to identify skills and knowledge gaps, and deliver additional training which includes disciplinary training, user training and best practice in ethics review. A suite of [online training](#) including both user videos and handbooks has also been developed. These training materials are continually refreshed.

4.2 Communication Tools and Development

During 2023/24 a Task and Finish Group was established to refresh the Research Ethics and Integrity webpages. The webpages are one of the key mechanisms for socialising and sharing policy, guidance, contact information, training and user guides and access to the ethics online review system. The webpages are one of the most visited under the research umbrella, with around 4000 visits per year. However, the pages had grown organically and did not reflect our expanding research activity or governance process.

The webpage review changes included:

- i. Rationalising the existing number of pages to enable better navigation.
- ii. Improved access to user guides and videos.
- iii. Refreshed guidance on external research ethics approvals and systems (e.g. NHS REC).
- iv. Improved contact information and support and guidance information.

This work has provided students and staff with enhanced information and improved operability of our webpages.

5. Culture, Development and Leadership

5.1 Research Culture

Research culture is about our values and behaviours and the way we conduct, enable and celebrate our research. It is also reflective of the wider environment we work in and the systems, policies and processes that underpin this. At Northumbria we recognise that a key part of delivering research integrity is an open and rigorous research culture that is underpinned by clear policy and processes that enable researchers to produce high-quality research.

In July 2023 Prof Matt Baillie-Smith was appointed to the new role of Dean of Research Culture, and a Research Culture Committee (RCC) was established with representation across all faculties. The RCC includes reserved member spaces for traditionally underrepresented groups (e.g. people with lived experience of being from the global majority, disability, and LGBTQ+). The committee also includes representation from professional service staff and technical staff. As part of its Terms of Reference the committee will monitor research integrity activity where it intersects with research culture activity, for example reviewing a proposed Code of Good Conduct in Research. The Dean of Research Culture reports to the PVC (R&KE).

Research Culture Committee co-created a set of principles and initiatives to grow a more vibrant, fair and inclusive Research Culture at Northumbria. Our [Research Culture Action Plan](#) is a living document, which has been created through an iterative consultative process. It is intended to change and grow over time in line with emergent issues, driven both internally and externally. Research integrity is embedded into the principles, and specifically Principle Two:

'We conduct, share, and evaluate knowledge and research with integrity, openness, and fairness, promoting trust in research processes, and recognising that research quality is realised in many forms.'

The related actions under the Research Culture Action plan have strong links to research integrity activity.

Research Culture Principle	Research Culture Initiative	Timescale
We conduct, share, and evaluate knowledge and research with integrity, openness, and fairness, promoting trust in research processes, and recognising that research quality is realised in many forms.	I. Working Group for Responsible Research Assessment recommendations finalised, agreed and socialised.	2024 – 2026
	II. Good Research Conduct Policy approved and implemented.	2025 – 2026
	III. Revised Managing Misconduct in Research Policy approved and implemented.	2024 – 2025
	IV. Revised Open Research Policy implemented and socialised.	2024 – 2025
	V. Research Integrity Champions Network established.	2026 – 2027
	VI. Good Research Practice development programme agreed.	2025 - 2027
	VII. Development of research career support for mid-career researchers.	2025 – 2027
	VIII. Build our evidence base of research culture case studies.	2024 – 2027

The delivery and governance of these actions are overseen by the Head of Research Culture and Integrity, as well as the Dean of Research Culture.

5.2 Research Ethics Leadership and Support

To develop leadership and embed a culture of ethics and integrity, Faculty Research Ethics Directors and Departmental Ethics Leads have been able to take advantage of additional training on ethics and integrity from the UK Research Integrity Office (of which the University is a member). An annually updated ethics training module is mandatory for all staff who conduct research to ensure awareness of the University's policies and processes, and the use of the new ethics online system. Completion details are shared with Departmental Ethics Leads who encourage completion.

The University provides mentoring for both new and existing staff and has renewed its HR Excellence in Research Award in 2023 as part of the ten-year review cycle. The HR Excellence in Research Award is granted to universities who can show their support of early career researchers and compliance with the principles of the 2019 Researcher Development Concordat (to which the University is also a signatory). The University has continued to make a significant investment in online materials to support staff and students at all levels.

The University contributes to sector-level initiatives to develop common standards and respond to external developments (e.g., via UKRIO and ARMA). Furthermore, we benefit from the shared expertise of such forums as the North-East Integrity Forum and the Research Ethics and Governance Special Interest Group for ARMA.

6. Monitoring and reporting

Research Ethics Committee oversees the research ethics regulatory and governance framework of the University. The Committee supports the university research environment to ensure that research is delivered with integrity and follows ethical frameworks including disciplinary norms, and external requirements (e.g. NHS Research Ethics Committee). The specific responsibilities of the Committee include:

- To monitor and review the University's Research Ethics Policy and Research Ethics and Governance Framework in the light of the University's developing ethical experience and the external research ethics environment and to propose changes as required.
- To ensure a framework is in place for the development of staff and systems that support the ethical review and governance of research.
- To consider annual reports and annual audits from faculties on the management of ethical issues in research and the operation of Faculty level
- To approve, and periodically review, the University's Research Ethics and Governance Framework.
- To provide written guidelines on ethical issues in research for use by staff and students of the University.
- To advise on any issues of an ethical nature directly referred to it by the Faculty Research Ethics Committee and Service Departments.
- To submit an annual report on the Committee's activities and the operation of procedures for ethical review of research to Academic Board.
- To review the arrangements in place to ensure compliance with the Concordat to Support Research Integrity.

The Faculty Research Ethics Directors and Departmental Ethics Lead meet regularly with key staff in Research and Innovation Services, the Governance team and the Health and Safety team, to review processes and procedures for research ethics, making recommendations to University and Faculty Research Ethics Committee as appropriate. This has now been formally constituted as the Ethics Steering Group which meets every two-months and reports to Research Ethics Committee. Ethics Steering Group supports the implementation of ethics processes and the dissemination of good research practice through Departments.

The Research Ethics and Integrity team also provide secretarial support to Research Ethics Committee, Faculty Research Ethics Committees and Ethics Steering Group, and are responsible for ensuring that external approvals (e.g. Health Research Authority, NHS Research Ethics Committee) via the Integrated Research Approvals System are completed and maintained with appropriate university level authority. The team is a valued point of contact for students and staff seeking advice, support and guidance on research integrity and research ethics issues. The team also ensure that the ethical review system, research ethics and integrity training, and practices and processes across the University are fit for purpose and reviewed regularly to reflect best practice in the sector and align with external frameworks.

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.

[Please insert response]

As well as the policy and process changes detailed above, a number of projects were undertaken this year, which include:

1. Review and Update of the Misconduct in Research Policy

It was agreed at Research Ethics Committee (June 2023) that updates to the Academic Misconduct in Research Policy were required given the growing complexity of due diligence and trusted research, as well as the growing use of ghosting services and artificial intelligence. In June 2023 UK Research Integrity Office released an update to its guidance on Academic Misconduct which also needed to be considered to ensure alignment with sector best practice.

After discussion with HR, Faculty, Graduate School Manager and Due Diligence Manager the following approach to changes was suggested:

- I. That Research Ethics Committee undertake responsibility for regular review of the Policy (e.g. annual review).
- II. That a substantial review of the Policy be undertaken to eliminate any duplication, to streamline the process with a case conference approach, and to clearly define responsibilities and actions for all stakeholders.
- III. That the links to the student regulations be made clear and consistent.
- IV. That the Policy is published internally and externally as part of Northumbria's commitment to the Concordat to Support Research Integrity.
- V. That reference to due diligence processes and guidance are included.
- VI. That authorship integrity and data integrity are incorporated into the misconduct categories with reference to ghost-writing, and use of artificial intelligence in the creation and dissemination of research.

The proposed changes realised a significant redrafting of the policy, and its reduction from around 22 pages to five. Significant changes include:

- A reduction in the number of stages in the process from three to two. There is now a review and initial assessment stage and a formal investigation.
- Updates to the definitions of academic misconduct in line with current sector concerns and UKRIO guidance (e.g ghosting).
- Clarified scope and purpose of the policy.
- Inserted roles and responsibilities table.
- Clarified purpose and outcomes at each stage.
- Redrafting of section on outcomes and reporting for clarification.

The revised policy was approved by Academic Board in November 2024 and will be publicly available on updated webpages. Monitoring and socialisation of the policy's implementation will be undertaken by REC.

2. Consent and Participant Information Documentation

Following feedback from the Faculty Research Ethics Director for Arts, Design and Social Sciences, a Task and Finish Group was established by REC to review the participant information documentation templates supplied to staff and students. Participant information is a key ethics concern, aligned to research culture, which supports trust in research, and can encourage or discourage underrepresented populations into research activity.

Significant changes were made to the templates which included:

- Improved legibility and language to Consent forms, Participant Information Sheets and Participant Debrief Sheets.
- Reducing the number of templates for consent forms to avoid duplication and ensure consistency of use.
- Improved guidance and availability of forms to provide participants and researchers with accurate and informative information.

The revised documentation was approved by REC in June 2024. The updates provide an enhanced level of consistency and rigour to participant information and gives assurance to REC that researchers at all stages (including students) are providing participants with the correct information.

The changes have been operationalised through the ethics and integrity [webpages](#), Departmental Leads, and College of Ethics Reviewers. While the Research Ethics and Integrity team can monitor usage through the ethics online system triage process.

3. Process Development to Support Research on Political Extremism

During 2023/24 a process was developed in collaboration with multiple teams across the University to support researchers undertaking data collection activities on political extremism. This research activity is governed by disciplinary norms, and external legal and regulatory frameworks, including Prevent. There are additional physical and online safety considerations for the researcher and their institution. This includes not only physical safety on campus, and off, but also online profiles, presence and access through University IT services.

To enable researchers to conduct data collection on political extremist individuals, groups and documents, the Research Ethics and Integrity team worked closely with the researchers, Faculty Research Ethics Director, Departmental Ethics Leads Head of IT Security, and Governance Manager to engineer a process that provide multiple assurance points and approvals to access an isolated desktop computer. This process is now in effect and is monitored to ensure the safety and wellbeing of the researchers.

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.

[Please insert response]

Improving Participant Information Documentation

Research process development to support research on the far right

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.

[Please insert response]

The University encourages a culture of openness and transparency where errors committed due to a lack of understanding and without intent to deceive, are handled on a case-by-case basis as some unintentional mistakes have more serious outcomes. Cases are addressed through thorough investigation, support and training. We encourage researchers to seek advice where they become aware that behaviour, including their own, may have fallen short of the expected standards. The University also ensures that, when allegations are made, there are appropriate levels of confidentiality and safeguards to protect those making allegations in good faith, as well as ensuring that individuals who are exonerated have their reputations protected and suffer no adverse consequences. Allegations can be anonymously made to the Chair of REC (Prof Louise Bracken, PVC R&KE), and the Research Environment and Integrity Manager (Ellen Cole).

The University is committed to using transparent, robust, and fair processes to deal with allegations of research misconduct when they arise.

The University has an Academic Misconduct in Research policy which reflects best practice in the sector and clearly outlines the procedures, roles and required activities and behaviours of all those involved in an allegation of academic misconduct and any ensuing investigation. The policy and processes continue to provide a proportionate, timely and transparent way for the University to deal with such allegations that is both fair and robust. The policy is applicable to both externally and internally funded research projects. All investigations produce a final report and include recommendations for further action and lessons learned. Reports and outcomes are shared at REC, and recommendations distributed through the Faculty Research Ethics Directors and Departmental Leads.

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	2	0	0	0
Failure to meet legal, ethical and professional obligations	1	0	0	0
Misrepresentation (eg data; involvement; interests; qualification; and/or publication history)	2	0	0	0
Improper dealing with allegations of misconduct	0	0	0	0
Multiple areas of concern (when received in a single allegation)	0	0	0	0
Other*				
Total:	5			

***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.**

[Please insert response if applicable]