

# Research Integrity Annual Statement

1<sup>st</sup> Aug 2022- 31<sup>st</sup> July 2023

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Abbreviations used in this document:  
AWERB: Animal Welfare Ethical Review Board  
ECR: Early Carer Researcher  
PGR: Post-Graduate Researcher  
RIGO: Research Integrity Governance Office

**Key contact information**

Question	Response
<b>1A. Name of organisation</b>	University of Surrey
<b>1B. Type of organisation:</b>  <b>higher education institution/industry/independent research performing organisation/other (please state)</b>	Higher Education
<b>1C. Date statement approved by governing body (DD/MM/YY)</b>	
<b>1D. Web address of organisation's research integrity page (if applicable)</b>	<a href="https://www.surrey.ac.uk/research/excellence/research-integrity-and-governance">https://www.surrey.ac.uk/research/excellence/research-integrity-and-governance</a>
<b>1E. Named senior member of staff to oversee research integrity</b>	Name: Tim Dunne
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# Statement for 2022-23

## 1. Introduction

At the University, we are committed to delivering the principles set out in the Concordat to Support Research Integrity and strive to incorporate these into our everyday research culture. We recognise that we cannot become complacent and must continue to place research integrity at the centre of our research endeavours. To this end, we are committed to implementing the requirements of the new version of the Concordat, which was released on the 25th October 2019.

## 2. Research Culture and Integrity

### 2.1 Training/Awareness

- The University has introduced four integrity-related training modules from the external provider Epigeum. The four modules are available to all staff and students and are actively promoted during Ethics and Governance Review application advice sessions. The training is also detailed in the “New to Surrey” staff intranet pages, uptake and feedback is being actively reviewed.
- Two sessions (Ethics and Governance Reviews for your research) delivered, timed for new cohorts in February and May. Further sessions planned for October and throughout the year as required.
- In-person subject-specific training was delivered to eight schools/departments. A further in-person session was held for PGRs and staff from the faculty of Engineering and Physical Sciences. One in-person and one online open session were held in conjunction with the Doctoral College.
- Presentations were delivered to the Faculty Research and Innovation Office professional services teams from all faculties.
- Staff attended four market-place events held for Doctoral and Early-Carer Researchers and gave advice to students.
- The University’s Open Research Unit continues to provide training sessions and workshops covering: “Open Research: Research Data Management and Open Data” and “Open Research: Data Management Plans”
- The Open Research team continues to provide the training either via the Doctoral College programme or scheduled directly with the faculties:
  - Introduction to Open Research: as open as possible, as closed as necessary;
  - Open access to research publications;
  - Open Research web pages have been revised and updated;
  - Increasing the visibility of your research;
  - Open licences; and
  - Introduction to research metrics.
- Training on conducting research with human samples. Members of the Research Integrity and Governance Office (RIGO) continue to provide mandatory training via Teams on ‘The Use of Human Tissue in Research’ on a monthly basis.
- Significant programme to ensure that staff who were trained after the last inspection refreshed their training as it was more than 3 years ago. 18 Sessions were held with over 130 staff receiving in-house training.
- RIGO continues to update its online guidance and templates for (staff and student) applicants to the University Ethics Committee and external review committees.
- Under the Concordat commitment to research culture, information about the narrative CV resume for researchers has been added to the Open Research pages of the website

(<https://www.surrey.ac.uk/library/open-research/resume-researchers-and-innovation-narrative-cv-approach>)

### **3. Actions and activities to strengthen understanding and support application in relation to research integrity issues**

During 2022-23, the University has undertaken the following activities to support and strengthen the understanding and application of research integrity issues.

**3.1 The Open Research strategic goals and action plan** (launched March 2022) continues to guide our planning. The strategic goals are aligned to the University's refreshed strategy and provide a framework for the action plan. The [action plan](#) was developed in line with those of several other Universities; these are shared publicly to demonstrate Open Research activity in the institution.

#### **3.2 Committees and Working Groups supporting research integrity**

##### **Research Integrity and Governance Committee (RIGC)**

The Research Integrity and Governance Committee (RIGC) is responsible for ensuring that research activity at the University is carried out to the highest standards of rigour and integrity and to provide strategic direction on the development, implementation, and evaluation of research policies to be compliant with the Concordat. The RIGC is a sub-committee of the University Research & Innovation Committee (URIC) and was chaired by the Pro-Vice-Chancellor Research and Innovation during this time, meeting on 7<sup>th</sup> Sept 2022, 16<sup>th</sup> November 2022, 1 March 2023 and 10<sup>th</sup> May 2023.

##### **Open Research Working Group (ORWG)**

Surrey Open Research Working Group (ORWG) is an action-oriented team of researchers and professional services. Aligned with the University of Surrey Open Research strategy and Action plan, the group's central aim is to advance Open Research practice across the University, with the goal of making the processes and products of research at the University of Surrey as transparent, accessible and reproducible as possible. The ORWG meets every 6 weeks and is alternately chaired by the Academic Lead Research Culture and Integrity and Open Research Manager [Strategy](#)

The Open Research strategic goals and action plan were launched (March 2022). The strategic goals are aligned to the University's refreshed strategy and provide a framework for the action plan. The action plan was developed in line with those of several other Universities; these are shared publicly to demonstrate Open Research activity in the institution.

##### **University Ethics Committee (UEC)**

The University Ethics Committee is an independent group made up of academic and other university staff, post-graduate students and members of the public. The UEC conduct ethical review of research involving human subjects or data. The reviews are carried out remotely.

- **Ethics Process Review** – Several Schools/Departments across the University developed SSPs, which were approved and implemented. These included the Centre for Environment and Sustainability, Department of Sociology and the School of Veterinary Medicine. Additionally, the School of Psychology has a number of SSPs nearing completion. SSPs are singular overarching protocol applications which remove the need for numerous smaller and similar proposals going through ethical assessment on an individual basis. These are to be used in low-risk areas of research with large cohorts.
- **Researcher training** – The acting Co-Chairs of the University Ethics Committee have worked closely with RIGO in providing bespoke support to researchers where required.
- **Committee training** – As part of two University Ethics Committee meetings held in November 2022 and May 2023, members were able to feed back into best practice in reviewing applications and amendments, with refresher information given. After a recruitment drive for UEC members from within the University, new committee members participated in a virtual induction in June 2023, after which they undertook training using the newly introduced Epigeum package.

### **Research Data Governance and Operations Group (RDGOG)**

- RDGOG was superseded by a new research data task and finish group which met for the first time in May 2023. The group includes representatives from IT, Information governance, research and innovation and the library and learning services, and continues to meet bi-monthly. The aims of the group include improving the oversight, controls relating to all research data – and addressing the University's risk relating to confidential, sensitive research data. Improving the processes and associated guidance from a researcher's perspective. Supporting the research infrastructure programme, which aims to increase Surrey's capacity to hold research data in a secure environment (research infrastructure programme/Surrey Research Compute) and to increase Surrey's compute capabilities and improving the management information related to research data.

### **Human Tissue Research Operations Group (HTROG)**

The University license was updated in September 2022. The Designated Individual chairs the HTROG committee. Named 'Persons Designate' for each satellite site conduct audits according to a schedule. As a result of the audits a number of compliance issues were identified and have been addressed. Work continues to transfer paper sample tracking records to an online system. The committee oversees research with samples held under the HTA license and under HRA clinical trial approvals. The committee met on 24 August 2022, 2 November 2022 and 15 February 2023.

### **Animal Welfare and Ethical Review Body (AWERB)**

The AWERB oversees the use of animals, their tissues or data, in research and teaching activities across the University. The AWERB advises the Procedures Establishment Licence (PEL) holder to ensure that the University is compliant with the Animals (Scientific Procedures) Act 1986 (ASPA), as amended in 2012 to include the requirements of the European Directive 2010/63/EU. The AWERB provides a local framework acting to ensure that all use of animals by University personnel is carefully considered and justified, that proper account is taken of all possibilities to reduce, replace or refine their use in procedures, and that high standards of accommodation and care are achieved.

- The University successfully completed a Facilities Audit by the Animals in Science Regulation Unit (ASRU) with no concerns, actions or enforcement activities identified.
- The AWERB is updating public and internal-facing webpages to ensure that information related to our use of animals is clear and transparent in line with the Concordat on Openness on Animal Research.
- The non-ASPA (NASPA) sub-committee has progressed the first Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) that provide singular oversight of the care and use of animals in teaching activities.
- The AWERB organised an annual training event, open to all individuals that use animals as well as committee members, on communicating Animal Research.

### **3.3 External engagement/External Memberships**

The University keeps abreast of developments in research integrity through its membership of the UK Research Integrity Office (UKRIO) and UK Reproducibility Network (UKRN), Understanding Animal Research (UAR) and the Association for Research Administrators (ARMA). The University also attends the UKRI Stakeholder days and liaises with UKRI on a regular basis to have up-to-date information regarding research council requirements.

The University is a member of Task Force Open Science within CESAER, a European initiative which has a strong voice in the discussion and implementation of open science.

- Surrey is part of a consortium of 18 universities (September 2021) – members of the [UK Reproducibility Network](#) (UKRN)– who received [significant funding](#) from the Research England Development Fund. This national [Open Research Programme](#) has progressed in the following ways:

- We now have institutional pages on the UKRN website:  
<https://www.ukrn.org/partner-institutions/>
  - An audit of training activities at all UKRN member institutions, including Surrey, was conducted with a view to identify strengths, existing expertise as well as gaps in training provision across its members. UKRN used this data to determine the set of 'train the trainer' courses to offer.
  - At Surrey, we now have a collated list of 'trainers' and are offering free train-the-trainer courses across the UK. Topics include pre-registration of studies/registered reports, open and FAIR data, preprints and open access publishing. The expectation is that trainers will attend the train-the-trainer course, and then use what they have learned to run and record a training session at Surrey on your return (with full admin support).
  - The first train the trainer course took place in June 2023, and our trainer will run the first training on the topic of "Transparency and Reproducibility in Quantitative Research in the Social Sciences" in September 2023.
- Academic Lead Research Culture and Integrity represented Surrey at the British Neuroscience Association by giving a presentation entitled "Open Research at the University of Surrey" in November 2022.
  - Academic Lead Research Culture and Integrity are representatives at the UKRI [alternative uses group \(AUG\)](#)
  - The University continues to be a member of Task Force Open Science within CESAER, a European initiative which has a strong voice in the discussion and implementation of Open Research. Open Research Manager is currently collaborating with CESAER members on a white paper on recommended measures to lift specific barriers to Open Research.

#### 4. Case Study on good practice – Open Research Working Group

The University considers the open research agenda a key aspect of integrity, this year there has been a particular focus on increasing awareness, example of activities are included below.

##### Communication, training and events

- **The Open Research website** continues to be added to and updated with further information and guidance tailored to funders' requirements and Open Research initiatives. New pages were created on a range of Open Research practices, contact/support information, and further resources. These include pages on the R4RI Narrative like CV and authorship, and updates to the Open Research handbook, the Open Research checklist, Open access, Open Research case studies, and the Responsible Metrics pages. Crucially, guidance on the website is now more clearly linked to other aspects of research integrity, including transparency in the research process and awareness of and compliance with legal and governance aspects, including data protection and intellectual property.
- **Training sessions.** The Open Research team has delivered over 35 presentations and briefings have been delivered on Open Research (Open Access, research data, open licences; new UKRI policy) to raise awareness about changes and its implications, including OA publishing options. Training is delivered as part of an 'Open Research programme' or by invitation to School/Department meetings.
- **Open Research champions.** We launched an Open Research champions initiative, with inductions completed in January 2023. Open Research champions complete the Open Research online module and provide colleagues with assistance and sign-posting with Open Research related queries and are a point of contact for the Open Research team for communication and dissemination. They are also listed on the Open Research website as champions.
- **Open Research across disciplines.** We released the latest version of our resources for Open Research across disciplines: <https://osf.io/3r8hb/>. The document provides resources and examples of open research practices that are relevant to each discipline. The document lists case studies of open research per discipline, and resources per discipline (organised as: general, open methods, open data, open output and open education). The UK Reproducibility Network have adapted and extended the material into a series of webpages: <https://www.ukrn.org/disciplines/>
- **Communications** are also included in regular reports to Faculty research committees via the Faculty Librarians and the Faculty Research and Innovation Offices, and in the Doctoral College newsletter and the Faculty newsletters.
- **Open Access week (24th to 28th October).** Read our blogs on the theme of "Open for Climate Justice": <https://openresearchsurrey.wordpress.com/2022/10/23/international-open-access-week-2022/>
- This year, communication campaigns focussed on (a) the **UKRI Open Access Policy**. Researchers were made aware of the new UKRI Open Access Policy and associated Surrey guidance via emails, newsletters, briefings and presentations at School meetings. Resources include the infographic and journal list on the Open Research website. The guidance tells researchers what to do before submission, on submission and on acceptance, to ensure compliance with Open Access, including compliance with the next REF; (b) **promoting ORCID**: messages to register or connect ORCID id via the repository have been embedded in Pivot RP communications, Faculty Librarians communications, appraisal guidance and on an individual basis. More work needs to be done on this to ensure better engagement.
- The '[Open Research in practice](#)' module, [launched October 2021](#), is an online course introducing various aspects of open practice in research. The aim of the module is to encourage and support researchers in considering and adopting open practices suitable to their research area; and to continue applying these practices beyond taking the

module. The [Open Research module](#) has been updated during the 2022-23 academic year. The new version makes a clearer distinction between essential requirements (Open Access, research data) and further open and transparent practices. The essential requirements can be completed within 30 minutes. Again, the importance of openness working alongside transparency and integrity in research is highlighted throughout the module.

- **2023 Open Research Culture event, 9am to 3pm, 2<sup>nd</sup> February 2023.** The 2023 Open Research and Research Culture event was opened by President and Vice-Chancellor Professor Max Lu and attended by over 250 people in person and over 70 people online, demonstrating the University of Surrey's status as a lead UK institution in Open Research and our strong upward trajectory in Open Research culture. The [event website](#) includes videos and infographics of each talk, a link to posters from the event and a highlights video.
- **Undergraduate internships.** The Doctoral College ran 33 Undergraduate internships over July and August 2023. A priority was given to internships which featured an element of Open Research.

#### Supporting open and timely dissemination of research findings

- **Open Access publishing:** to ensure the open and timely dissemination of Surrey research, more than 24 transitional agreements were reviewed in 2022-2023, of which 13 were signed or renewed. These agreements support immediate Open Access to research publications; transition to fairer and more transparent Open Access publishing; and compliance with funders' policies.  
**Infrastructure (Open Research repository)** has been further developed to meet Open Research strategic goals, specifically the adoption of ORCID. Researchers are now able to register or connect their ORCID via the repository. Furthermore, the repository pushes publications to researchers' ORCID profile increasing transparency



## 5. Research Misconduct

### 5.1. The University provides assurance that the processes the institution has in place for dealing with allegations of misconduct are transparent, timely, robust and fair, and that they continue to be appropriate to the needs of the organisation.

The [Code of Practice on Handling Allegations of Research Misconduct](#) was introduced in 2015 and last updated in April 2019. The Code was developed with the involvement of several stakeholders, including the University of Surrey Students Union, academic representatives from the University, UKRIO and the Legal and Secretariat team.

The Code of Practice on Handling Allegations of Research Misconduct underwent an internal audit and the report presented in August 2021. The key findings have all been addressed. These were:

- The 'Code of Practice for Handling Allegations of Research Misconduct' needs to be updated and refreshed, and other procedures should be updated to include research guidelines, and the reporting line for the research misconduct process should be reviewed to preserve autonomy;

*The Code of Practice has been updated and is currently under review before release.*

- Improved training is required for research practitioners to ensure they are suitably knowledgeable to perform research projects with the University's required integrity and ethical compliance;

*The Epigeum training is available to all staff and students and is actively promoted by the Doctoral College and at all RIGO events.*

- Processes for receiving issues of research misconduct could be improved, either by changes that would encourage complainants to come forward, or with regards to information obtained by HR through staff exit interviews or investigations.

*An appeals process will be specified to bring the University of Surrey in line with other institutions.*

### 5.2. The University Statement on any formal investigations of research misconduct that have been undertaken, including data on the number of investigations

During the period of 01/08/2022 to 31/07/23, the University received four reports of potential misconduct, as listed in the table below. Annexe 1 shows the number of completed formal investigations over the last three years.

Type of allegation/complaint/integrity issue	Referred to Screening Panel	Outcome
Research Misconduct - misrepresentation	Yes	Respondent 1 – “unfounded” Respondent 2 – proceeded to formal investigation – concluded “not upheld and will be dismissed”.
Research Misconduct - misrepresentation	Yes	“Poor academic practice”.
Falsification of data	Yes	On-going
Misrepresentation of authorship	Yes	On-going

In addition the follow incidents were recorded but were not referred to screening panels:

A published article incorrectly attributed to University of Surrey  
An allegation of plagiarism with insufficient evidence presented  
A request for advice that did not fall within the remit of research misconduct

The following research incidents were also recorded:

- 6 reports of protocol deviations
- 12 reports of Human Tissue SOPs not being followed
- 2 reports of equipment malfunction in laboratories storing Human Tissue samples
- 2 student researchers who did not apply for ethical approval before commencing their research

**5.3. The University Statement on what the institution has learned from any formal investigations of research misconduct that have been undertaken, including what lessons have been learned to prevent the same type of incident re-occurring**

It was recognised that practices for authorship vary widely across disciplines. The doctoral college has identified this as an area for training for postgraduate and early career researchers.

The update to the Code of Practice will include a recommendation to seek mediation and other resolutions to disputes within research teams before issues escalate to research misconduct.

**5.4. The University Statement on how the institution creates and embeds a research environment in which all staff, researchers and students feel comfortable to report instances of misconduct**

The University has a Code of Practice on Handling Allegations of Research Misconduct which includes clear principles and mechanisms to ensure that any investigations are conducted in a fair, thorough, objective, and timely manner. All allegations received are treated with confidentiality. Any allegations concerning University staff can be reported at Faculty level by contacting the Faculty's Associate Dean Research and Innovation (ADRI), or by directly contacting the RIGO Team. Any allegations concerning postgraduate research students can be reported by contacting the Director of the Doctoral College, or directly to the RIGO Team. As per the University's Code of Practice on Handling Allegations of Research Misconduct, all those raising concerns in good faith will be protected, supported, and not penalised, in line with the University's Public Interest Disclosure Policy. Additionally, the University has a "Report and Support" webpage and framework primarily aimed at students but available for all staff to report instances of abuse, bullying, harassment, hate crime and sexual misconduct.

Meeting dates of governing bodies approval of the annual statement:

RIGC: 19 September 2023

URIC: 4 October 2023

Senate:

**Annexe 1. Research Integrity Statement 1<sup>st</sup> August 2020 - 31<sup>st</sup> July 2023**

The table below is based on the former RCUK assurance questions as a model – and recommended that doing so could be considered as good practice.

This table shows that by academic year, the number of formal investigations completed and of those, the number which were upheld (either in whole or in part)

- Figures are provided for the past 3 completed academic years with *year 1* representing the most recently completed year = 2022-23; year 2 = 2021-22; year 3 = 2020-21.
- “Formal investigation” is as described in the [RCUK Policy and Guidelines](#)
- The date is when the formal investigation was completed
- Investigations should be split by Research Council, and by type (as defined in the [integrity section of the UKRI webpage](#))

	Year	Fabrication		Falsification		Plagiarism		Misrepresentation		Breach of duty of care		Improper dealing with allegations of misconduct		Other	
		Completed	Upheld	Completed	Upheld	Completed	Upheld	Completed	Upheld	Completed	Upheld	Completed	Upheld	Completed	Upheld
AHRC	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
BBSRC	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
EPSRC	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
ESRC	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

MRC	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
NERC	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
STFC	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	3	0	0	0	0		1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Total (last 3 years)</b>		0	0	0	0	0	1 (2020)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0