



Annual statement on Research Integrity

The University is a signatory to [The Concordat to Research Integrity 2019](#).

The following annual statement has been approved by UREC and Research and Knowledge Transfer Committee of Senate and presented to Council in November 2023 and Senate in December 2023. The

Procedure for Investigation of Research Misconduct

The revised Procedure for Investigation of Research Misconduct was approved by Council in March 2022, following consultation with various internal stakeholders and engagement with the UK Research Integrity Office. The revised Procedure is publicly accessible via the University webpages.

Continuing our commitment to training

Training for academic supervisors and research ethics reviewers is provided by the central Research Ethics team and facilitated by the Organisational Development team, which affords better visibility and recording of attendance across the University. Reviewers must attend at least one training session before undertaking review on behalf of a Brunel REC and must attend refresher training every 12 months thereafter.

Colleges run training events for taught students, doctoral researchers, and staff. These are supplemented by training provided by individual departments to their students and staff members. We also run central training workshops for reviewers and supervisors with responsibility for taught student research projects.

Communication

Information and guidance on university ethics and integrity are disseminated as follows:

- Web page updates: Central pages and College specific pages
- Email circulars and IntraBrunel
- Responding to individual queries from staff and students

2. *Processes for dealing with allegations of misconduct*

Any person engaging in research in the name of Brunel University London is expected to observe the highest standards of conduct. The general principles in relation to research are addressed in the Brunel University London Research Integrity Code and in the University Code of Research Ethics.

The University has established and maintains standard procedures for the investigation of misconduct in research, ensuring that such allegations are thorough, fair and conducted in a timely manner. These are outlined in Council Ordinance 18 Procedures for Investigation of Research Misconduct.

The University defines research misconduct as follows:

1. Fabrication: making up results, other outputs (for example, artefacts) or aspects of research, including documentation and participant consent, and presenting and/or recording them as if they were real
2. Falsification: inappropriately manipulating and/or selecting research processes, materials, equipment, data, imagery and/or consents
3. Financial misconduct
4. Plagiarism or deception in proposing, carrying out or reporting results of primary research
5. Deliberate, reckless, or negligent deviations from accepted practice in conducting research
6. Conducting research with human participants without first obtaining research ethics approval
7. Failure to follow an agreed protocol, particularly if this failure results in unreasonable risk or harm to humans, other vertebrates, or the environment
8. Failure to meet legal, ethical or professional obligations, including not observing legal, ethical and other requirements for human research participants, animal subjects, or human organs or tissue used in research, or for the protection of the environment
 - breach of duty of care for humans involved in research whether deliberately, recklessly or by gross negligence, including failure to obtain appropriate informed consent
 - misuse of personal data, including inappropriate disclosures of the identity of research participants and other breaches of confidentiality
 - improper conduct in peer review of research proposals, results or manuscripts submitted for publication (including failure to disclose conflicts of interest; inadequate disclosure of clearly limited competence; misappropriation of the content of material; and breach of confidentiality or abuse of material provided in confidence for the purposes of peer review)
9. Misrepresentation of
 - data, including suppression of relevant results/data or knowingly, recklessly or by gross negligence presenting a flawed interpretation of data
 - involvement, including inappropriate claims to authorship or attribution of work and denial of authorship/attribution to persons who have made an appropriate contribution
 - interests, including failure to declare competing interests of researchers or funders of a study
 - qualifications, experience and/or credentials

11. Failure to maintain a duty of confidence where such confidentiality is expressly required or implied
12. Failure to ensure that any appropriate safeguards to protect human participants are embedded and followed.

Any allegation of research misconduct should be reported confidentially to the Secretary to Council or, in the event of a potential conflict of interest or absence, his/her nominated representative appointed by the Chair of Council. Any allegations of fiscal malfeasance or irregularity in relation to research activity should be reported confidentially to the Director of Finance.

3. *Formal investigations of research misconduct 2022/23*

The University Research Ethics Committee (UREC) made 0 investigations into staff or doctoral researchers.

For taught students, there were 67 investigations into Academic conduct in relation to ethics in UG final year projects or PGT dissertations. Of these, 47 were closed, 11 investigations were resolved formally; 9 remain under review (December 2023 data).

The University has conducted analysis to better understand high risk areas for these cases and is working to identify suitable measures regarding the increased number of submissions and cases including demand management, increasing reviewer base and streamlining processes.

4. *What the University has learned from formal investigations of research misconduct and actions taken to prevent the same type of incident re-occurring*

For staff and doctoral researchers we note that a zero return is a positive indicator, however we remain vigilant and are increasing oEMC /Spa5coers.96 842.0(oEMC n-5(s)-5(i)6(4(s)-5()-31 -9(s)-6 Tf705(ub)519m0 842i(t)-



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review points include discussions around research management skills. Details of the contact point for queries around research misconduct is on the 'my research' page of the e-vision portal for post graduate research students.

New colleagues are directed to training, and the Research Integrity code is highlighted in the welcome letter, online resources, welcome talks and induction checklists. Colleagues on contracts with a research element are encouraged further to complete the University Research integrity training unit, which is discipline specific and includes training relating to identifying and reporting misconduct.