

Annual statement on research integrity

UNIVERSITY OF
LEADING
THE WAY
WESTMINSTER[⌘]

Section 1: Key contact information

Question	Response
1A. Name of organisation	University of Westminster
1B. Type of organisation: higher education institution/industry/independent research performing organisation/other (please state)	Higher Education Institution (HEI)
1C. Date statement approved by governing body (DD/MM/YY)	Approved by Research and Knowledge Exchange Steering Research and Knowledge Exchange Steering Committee on 25/02/2026 Noted by Court of Governors on 11/03/2026 To be noted by Academic Council on 15/04/2026

1D. Web address of organisation's research integrity page (if applicable)	https://www.westminster.ac.uk/research/research-governance/research-integrity
1E. Named senior member of staff to oversee research integrity	Name: Professor Andrew Linn Deputy Vice Chancellor (Research and Knowledge Exchange)
	Email address: A.Linn@westminster.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: Huzma Kelly Research Ethics and Integrity Manager, Research and Knowledge Exchange Office (RKEO)
	Email address: H.Kelly01@westminster.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

Policies and systems

MAKING A DIFFERENCE

RESEARCH AND KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE STRATEGY 2022–2029

The University has a range of policies, strategies and procedures relating to research and knowledge exchange (KE) for use by colleagues and students to support them in best practice. These include the [Research and Knowledge Exchange Strategy \(2022-2029\)](#) and the [Public and Community Engagement Strategy \(2023-2029\)](#). The former strategy is currently undergoing a mid-term review. The [Code of Research Good Practice \(2025\)](#) is integral to the University's commitment to supporting research integrity. The research policies are usually reviewed every three years or sooner if necessary. A list of current policies and strategies can be found here: <https://www.westminster.ac.uk/research/research-governance/research-strategies-and-policies>

Dedicated public facing webpages for [Research Integrity \(including research misconduct and questionable research practice\)](#), research ethics, research governance, researcher support and guidance, research data management and open access research, all provide an open and transparent source of the University's research policies and systems.

The Virtual Research Environment (VRE) online research management system is a single portal for use by researchers and those managing research, covering areas around research funding, research repository, research governance and ethics, and doctoral student degrees management.

SharePoint and Egress for private and restricted systems to manage research governance and procedures or sensitive research.

Communications and engagement

[Research and Knowledge Exchange Strategy](#) Update events facilitated by the Deputy Vice Chancellor (Research and Knowledge Exchange). These relate to the mid-term review of [Making a Difference, our strategy for Research and Knowledge Exchange](#). The open events held on each of the three Campuses invite all colleagues to contribute to the mid-term review, to share their ideas and experiences, so that the University can be set to achieve its research and knowledge exchange objectives by 2029. As stated in [Making a Difference](#), "research is for everyone", allowing the University to create a strong and lasting impact on society as well as enriching the experience of all our students as much as academic and professional services colleagues. In these sessions we share some of our outstanding achievements over the past three years before working together on what remains to be done and how we can work together on that. Our

'mid-term review' is not about creating a new strategy but rather tightening the focus so that we achieve our [Being Westminster](#) goals

RKEO Newsletter across the University, public [web-pages](#) and internal communications site. Similar resource for [Graduate School](#) dedicated to doctoral research students and their supervisors.

Blackboard internal information, resource and guidance sites from Early and Mid-Career Researchers, as well as Human Tissue research.

College and School Research Leads providing local advice and support as well as regular updates from College and University-level research-related committees they are represented on.

The Research and Knowledge Exchange Steering Committee ratified the Research Communications Plans in June 2025, setting out strategic actions to enhance the external visibility of research, streamline internal communications, and strengthen compliance across the University.

Culture, development, and leadership

Regular training, development and drop-in discussion sessions facilitated cross University for research, by college leaders, Research and Knowledge Exchange Office (RKEO), Graduate School, and professional colleagues. Key colleagues such as the RKEO Researcher Development Manager and their counterpart new role in the Graduate School, lead with senior management on the University's communications strategy for research and knowledge exchange.



Professor Gregory Sporton speaking at Research Culture Symposium

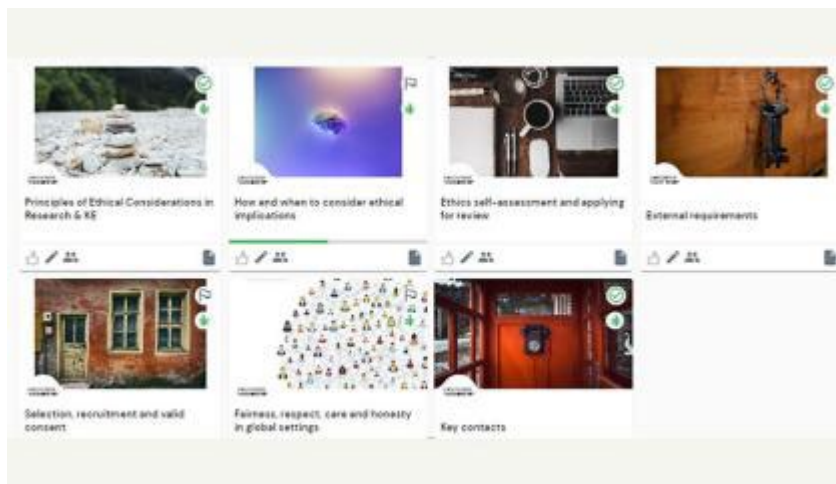
Inaugural [Research Culture Symposium](#) held in October 2025 and a new [Research Culture Statement](#) available publicly. The Research Culture Symposium kickstarted the University's Year of Research Culture 2025/26. The event aimed to encourage new thinking around the culture, inclusivity, ethics and practices of research across disciplines, featuring external speakers, panel discussions and sessions to showcase and inform the University's ongoing and planned initiatives to strengthen research across its campuses. The [Symposium](#) event aimed to advance the commitment to inclusive research culture by providing a space for academics, doctoral researchers, professional services colleagues and external

partners to engage, reflect on institutional and sectoral norms and explore new directions.

Research Culture and Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee.

Doctoral Researcher Development Programme continues at University and College level, with in person interactive training in research ethics and research integrity.

Mandatory research ethics reviewers training via the in-house, University of Westminster's own **Intro to Research Ethics module**:



Open Research, Open Access, and Research Data Management:



The Library & Archives Service's Research Environment and Scholarly Communications team leads on university-wide **open research** services, delivers training to researchers and doctoral researchers on **open access**, open access publishing and research data management (which includes content embedded in biannual research ethics inductions). The team provide guidance and advice across the research lifecycle, from research design, data management planning,

dissemination planning and research outputs data sharing and publication, and deliver library research systems (WestminsterResearch) and University of Westminster Press. The team also lead the AHRC funded Enact project to establish a data service for practice research and co-lead the Research Data Alliance Non-Traditional Research Outputs and Processes Interest Group – working towards better recognition of creative practice research outputs in global information standards. The University of Westminster Press follows research integrity best practice with peer review embedded at both proposal and manuscript stages.

Monitoring and reporting

- With the appointment of a new Research Governance Support Officer role at the University, further work is being undertaken to strengthen the reporting of the University's research governance bodies to the highest research governance body; the Research and Knowledge Exchange Steering Committee. The Terms of Reference for the Research and Knowledge Exchange Steering Committee were also strengthened specifically for the work the University carries out to support and strengthen research integrity itself.
- The University's VRE System provides monitoring and reporting functions for research managers, including research ethics committee representatives. This allows for reports to be provided to regulatory authorities or auditors of research.
- Dedicated publicly available confidential points of contact for reporting allegations of potential research misconduct and questionable research practice.
- University Sponsor authorisations processes in place to manage regulated research with audit, monitoring and reporting requirements, with dedicated support from RKEO Governance and Contracts colleagues.

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.

Commitment 3: Embedding a culture of research integrity



Review and revision of the University's Procedure for Research Misconduct Allegations (2017) and Code of Research Good Practice (2020) was undertaken. The University Approved for use in December 2025 the new [Code of Research Good Practice \(2025\)](#), importantly containing updated definitions for research misconduct and questionable research practice, based on the newly refreshed [Concordat to Support Research Integrity 2025 \(UK Committee on Research Integrity\)](#). Importantly, the [Concordat](#) states that employers are responsible for "maintaining a research environment that values research integrity and creates the conditions necessary for honest errors to be openly admitted without undue detriment". This relates to the new [Concordat](#) containing Questionable Research Practices and honest errors to recognise that research practice is on a spectrum.



The University adopted the [UK Research Integrity Office \(UKRIO\) Procedure for the Investigation of Misconduct in Research 2023](#), for use in December 2025. The Procedure is contextualised and sits within a wider framework for Research Integrity at the University including related policies such as the Public Interest Disclosure (Whistleblowing) Policy at the University's publicly facing [Research Integrity website](#).

The adoption of the [Procedure for the Investigation of Misconduct in Research \(UKRIO, 2023\)](#) includes:

- Alignment with nationally recognised procedures and policy.
- Inclusion of standards and principles.
- Clear and rigorous procedural steps, with clear responsibilities in line with the standards and principles.

- Fairer timely processes for all parties, with clear and timely communications.
- Alignment with employment rights.
- Alignment with clear expectations of funders and accountability to the research community.
- Alignment with other research organisations, including collaborators.
- Fair appeals processes for all researchers.
- Discussion points and reminders, as well as the procedural steps, to ensure best practice in all aspects.

The University has published its new [Research Ethics Governance Framework](#), benchmarked to the best practice standards set out in the [UKRIO/ARMA Research Ethics Review and Support Guidance for Research Organisations](#):



- This includes a new University [Research Ethics Policy](#) which acts as a publicly facing policy statement about the University's principles of research ethics, standards it sets, and expectations of its researchers and itself, as a research organisation producing high quality research.
- An important aspect of the [Research Ethics Governance Framework](#) is to ensure that there are clear and high standards of research ethics review and a positive culture of research ethics. An ethics review should be independent, competent, facilitative, and transparent and accountable, this includes proportionate reviews. It brings together expectations of the University with those of funders, the government, and other good practice.
- The [Research Ethics Governance Framework](#) includes new standard operating procedures to ensure a better operating system for research ethics review, as well as one that is supportive of researchers and facilitative of research. New procedures for Research and Knowledge Exchange Committees (RECs) include: 'Service Delivery levels', 'Expedited (fast track) Review', 'Appeals Procedure', 'Guidance for Reviewers and an Indicative checklist'. The Guidance for Reviewers aims to provide consistency of review with clear expectations of what is in the remit of a REC, it also aims to make responding to a REC clearer for a researcher.

- The [Research Ethics Governance Framework](#) will sit alongside researcher research ethics guidance and training resources and be available to all researchers to help them prepare for the ethics review of their research, by providing them with clear parameters and areas considered by an ethics review body, to help them succeed in securing a favourable ethical opinion and carry out their work ethically.

A training course for UKRIO subscribers

Following the implementation of the UK Research Integrity Office's (UKRIO's) **Introduction to Research Integrity pilot module** which was released for use by a significant portion of researchers at the University in 2024, the new updated UKRIO Research Integrity module, which now offered a greater number of participant spaces, would be rolled out to all researchers in May 2026.

Engaging, accessible online training for UKRIO subscribers

- The University's Research Ethics and Integrity Manager was invited to join the **UKRIO Online Training Workgroup (OTW) for UKRIO's Research Ethics online courses**. The Research Ethics and Integrity Manager as a member of the group was tasked to provide expert review of the content, functionality and technical delivery of an Introduction to Research Ethics course (Modules 1-4), and one of two stand-alone specialist modules: Module 5: Navigating the complexity, risks, and benefits of emotionally challenging or sensitive research, Module 6: Research with children and young people.
- The University will roll out the **UKRIO Intro to Research Ethics** course, and specialist stand-alone modules to all University researchers, to complement its own existing in-house Intro to [Research Ethics module and research ethics guidance](#).

The University of Westminster launches the [new research centre AI network in October 2025](#). This university-wide research centre brings together diverse expertise in AI and data science to promote interdisciplinary collaboration, boost external partnerships and support cutting-edge, responsible AI research that addresses real-world challenges:



The University also produced Guidance for use of [AI in academic research](#).

The University of Westminster also became a full signatory to the Wellcome Trust's [Concordat for the Environmental Sustainability of Research and Innovation Practice](#) in 2025, affirming the University's commitment to embedding environmental responsibility within research and innovation activities.

A REF 2029 Sub-Committee, established as a fixed-term task-and-finish group, to oversee governance and decision-making relating to the University's submission to REF 2029.

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.

Following the last statement the planned review and revision of the Procedure for managing research misconduct allegations (2017) and the Code of Research Good Practice (2020) produced positive impact with the newly updated Code of Practice 2025, which provides clarity on the range of research misconduct and questionable research practices. The impact of adopting the [UKRIO Procedure to Investigate Misconduct in Research](#) will be hugely significant in ensuring fair, timely and transparent procedures at the University. It allows for resolution using Informal Measures, using the [Procedure](#) to guide this, this is a significant development for the University. The [Procedure](#) recognised honest errors and questionable research practice. The [Procedure](#) will apply to research colleagues and doctoral research students working on research carried out by the University, whilst allowing flexibility on whether the [Procedure](#) or alternative routes will be suitable for research misconduct allegations regarding doctoral students on a case-by-case basis. As mentioned in the last Statement, a restricted confidential

system has been set up for recording research misconduct investigation cases and their documentation to allow the University to meet its obligations in managing such investigations satisfactorily. Potential Research Misconduct Investigation Panel members and those supporting the management of the [Procedure](#), have received training in the new [Procedure](#) in use at the University.

Future developments will include broader reach in training researchers and those in the research community around the new 2025 [Code of Research Good Practice](#) and [Procedure for Investigation into Misconduct in Research](#). Case studies into research misconduct investigation scenarios will be used to assist with development needs of researchers across the University. The understanding of research integrity by researchers at all levels should be enhanced following the roll out of the new UKRIO Research Integrity module too.

Further work in the next period (March 2026 onwards) will be carried out regarding a wider review and revision of the Code of Research Good Practice, to ensure a full comprehensive review to occur not only around research misconduct areas. This will involve a range of research stakeholders and will be proposed for implementation in the new academic year. This is important in order to capture the developments in research integrity since the last major revision in 2020 and the minor revision in 2025, and better reflect the University's ongoing commitment to the newly refreshed [Concordat to Support Research Integrity, \(UK Committee on Research Integrity 2025\)](#).

The publication of a Framework for [research ethics review](#) will provide transparency to researchers on the parameters for review, enhanced guidance, and stronger ethical research proposals. The review of the research ethics website, has now resulted in all information, resources, and procedures around research ethics to be on a single publicly available website, meaning no restrictions to students or colleagues, or external participants. Train the Trainer sessions will occur in March 2025 for the newly appointed Research and Knowledge Exchange College Managers, in the new Research Ethics Reviewer Indicative Checklist and Guidance for Reviewers. This will allow the Managers to disseminate the training to the University's College Research and Knowledge Exchange Ethics Committees (CRECs). With the aim to ensuring further dissemination of consistent research ethics review parameters across the University. The University has implemented its new Managing Participants Complaint Standard Operating Procedure for non-Human Tissue authority research, which resulted in a clear and documented process by one Head of School in receipt of a participant complaint.

Following strengthening of the governance structure internally for the management and operation of **Human Tissue Authority** related research, and ongoing training and dissemination to its researchers working in the area, the University has made significant progress in maintaining its compliance with the Human Tissue Authority. The new structure allows for clearer responsibility allocation and assurance routes, up to University Executive Board. The University continued to progress on its work around standard operating procedures and quality management system, including a new updated Quality Manual. In August 2025-October 2025, the Human Tissue Authority carried out a Regulatory Assessment and Site Inspection visit to assure itself of the University's compliance with the relevant legislation, codes of practice and directions. The new internal structure allowed for the swift set up of an Inspection Planning Group who responded to the Human Tissue Authority's

request during the assessment and inspection. The University has made a significant amount of progress since its last inspection in May 2019, and the Regulatory Assessment and Inspection outcome Report for October 2025, resulted in no shortfalls and therefore no Corrective or Preventative Action (CAPA) Plan.

The Report can be found here:

<https://www.hta.gov.uk/professional/establishments/university-westminster>

Licence number: 12015

LICENSED PREMISES: University of Westminster

DESIGNATED INDIVIDUAL: John Joseph Murphy

LICENCE STATUS: Licence Granted

SECTOR: [Research](#)

The Chair of the **Research Culture and Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee** led a substantial programme of work, including:

- Delivering a series of listening exercises with colleagues across multiple staff networks and groups.
- Analysing existing survey data and relevant committee reports.
- Submitting a comprehensive Research Culture report to the Research and Knowledge Exchange Steering Committee, identifying key priority areas.
- Organising the [inaugural Research Culture Symposium](#) as academic year 2025-26 had been designated as the year of Research Culture.
- Drafting and publishing on the University's public website, the [University's Research Culture Statement](#)
- Leading the Athena Swan application and action plan, providing evidence-based insights into gender equity and academic progression pathways.

University of Westminster's Black History Year Researchers Network won [the Research Culture Impact Award at the Vitae ICE Awards 2025](#). This award was presented in recognition of the significant contributions made by University of Westminster colleagues to supporting Black researchers in reaching their full potential.

The University of Westminster submitted to Universities UK its annual Researcher Development Concordat Report and Action Plan in October 2025. As a signatory to the [Researcher Development Concordat](#), the University is committed to driving meaningful change across the three core areas: environment and culture, employment, and professional development. The Report and Action Plan also provide a strategic framework for advancing researcher development activity across the University.

The Research Governance management processes will be strengthened by work with the new Governance Support Officer in RKEO and the University's wider Governance Team, to ensure they are robust and effective in supporting best practice in research.

A further RKEO colleague completed the Higher Education Export Controls Association Export Controls course with an aim to continuing to build on its [Trusted Research and Innovation](#) agenda expertise.

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.

The University will consider inclusion of an exemplar case study in the area of research integrity (research good practice) for the next Statement.

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.

The University has clear and public processes in place for those with concerns about the integrity of research to raise these concerns in a confidential manner:

- [Procedure for the Investigation of Misconduct in Research](#) (adopted for use by the University 15 December 2025, three year or sooner if needed, review period)
- [Student research misconduct regulations \(PDF\)](#) (Approved Academic Council, 18 October 2017) – *under review*.
- [Public Interest Disclosure Policy \('Whistleblowing' policy\)](#) (Approved by Court of Governors: 15 March 2023, Effective date: 1 April 2023, Next review date: November 2025]

The University has robust policies and procedures in place relating to research integrity available to all students, colleagues as well as publicly. The Head of Graduate School and college doctoral coordinators can support students in acting

as a confidential liaison point for any concerns regarding making an allegation of research misconduct.

The key documents are the University's [Code of Research Good Practice](#) (December 2025), the [Public Interest Disclosure Policy](#) (March 2023) and the [Research Ethics Governance Framework](#) (June 2024).

A list of research related policies and strategies can be found here:

<https://www.westminster.ac.uk/research/research-governance/research-strategies-and-policies>.

Key contacts:

Web address of organisation's research integrity page (containing research good practice and research misconduct information)	https://www.westminster.ac.uk/research/research-governance/research-integrity
Named Person contact details for receiving allegations of suspected research misconduct	Name: Professor Andrew Linn, Deputy Vice Chancellor (Research and Knowledge Exchange) Email: A.Linn@westminster.ac.uk
Alternative Named Person contact details for receiving allegations of suspected research misconduct	Name: Professor Christos Kalantaridis, Pro Vice Chancellor (Teaching Excellence and Student Experience) and Head of College: Westminster Business School Email: C.Kalantaridis@westminster.ac.uk
First Point of Contact for information and queries about the Procedure for Research Investigation into Misconduct in Research	Research Ethics and Integrity Manager (Huzma Kelly), Research and Knowledge Exchange Office (RKEO). Email: H.Kelly01@westminster.ac.uk

The website provides information to easily allow confidential suspected research misconduct to be reported. We continue to signpost colleagues and students via the newly designed webpages, research newsletters, and doctoral training.

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	1	1	0	0
Failure to meet legal, ethical and professional obligations				
Misrepresentation (eg 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>				
Total:	1	1	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.**

[Please insert response if applicable]