

## **Annual Statement on Research Integrity**

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### **Supporting High Quality Research**

The University of Lincoln is committed to encouraging research of the highest quality by supporting good research conduct and helping to prevent misconduct.

The University is committed to complying with the [UUK Concordat to support Research Integrity](#) (the concordat). The University of Lincoln's [Code of Practice for Research](#) (CoPR) translates the Concordat into university policy and provides a comprehensive framework for good research conduct and the governance of all research carried out across the University.

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic the University suspended all face-to-face and in person research. Research projects were either halted or amended to allow for data to be collected remotely where appropriate. Risk assessments were undertaken to re-open research spaces / laboratories and to undertake research activity in accordance with emerging government and university guidance.

This annual statement covers the period September 2019 – August 2021

### **Research Ethics**

The University of Lincoln's [Research Ethics Policy](#) provides general principles and standards for good ethical practice in research, for the individual researcher (staff member or student) and the institution. The university's Research Ethics Policy is currently under review.

### **University Research Ethics Committee (UREC)**

The remit of the University's Research Ethics Committee was reviewed and amended to specifically include research integrity.

Previously URECs formal remit was limited the oversight of research ethics, although aspects of research integrity and research governance were discussed this was not reflected committee terms of reference.

Members of the committee acknowledged that the HEI landscape is evolving to emphasise the importance of research integrity. The committee agreed that there is an institutional need to address research related risks including reputational, international, (cyber) security, and the governance of research more broadly. The committee supported the motion to revise the remit and scope of the committee considering this.

The name has been revised to include specific reference to Research Integrity and is now referred to as the University Research Integrity and Ethics Committee (URIEC).

### **Modified Terms of Reference**

The University Research Integrity & Ethics Committee (URIEC) has oversight of Research Integrity and ethical standards across the University to ensure research and research related activity is conducted to the highest standards.

URIEC works in unison with the Research Committee

### **Specific objectives**

- To monitor and review policies and procedures related to research integrity and ethics
- To monitor emerging issues relating to research integrity, security, ethics and governance and translate these into university policy and procedures (where appropriate)
- To support an academic environment that is underpinned by a culture of good research integrity, based on good governance, best practice, and support for the development of researchers
- To ensure that Human/Non-Human Research Ethics Committees are supported to implement, monitor and review the delivery and support for ethical research conduct in their respective disciplines
- To consider and adjudicate on complex cases where challenges to ethical research conduct cannot be resolved by the Human / Non-Human Committees
- To report annually to the Research and Enterprise Committee on all aspects of Research Integrity and Ethics.

## Human Tissue Research Licence

The University of Lincoln maintains a Human Tissue Authority Licence for Research (#12678). The Corporate Licence holder is the University of Lincoln while the Designated Individual (DI) is Professor Jon Whitehead.

The Human Tissue Oversight Group (HTOG) ensures its compliance with the Act under the terms and conditions of its license.

The University's Human Tissue Quality Manual (HT-QM) and supporting Standard Operating Procedures (HT-SOPs) outline the university's commitment to comply with its HTA licence for research and were reviewed in April 2021 with the next review being April 2023.

### Activities undertaken to support and raise awareness of research integrity in 2020/21 include:

- Research Integrity and ethics training incorporated into Doctoral School induction (PGR students)
- Research Integrity and ethics training available to all academic staff as part of the Academic Development Programme
- Virt2ue ethics training undertaken by the Research Governance Manager to further develop the University's Research Integrity training.
- Research Integrity in Practice training developed and piloted with 22 academic, professional services and students.
- The University's external webpages updated to reflect the ongoing commitment to the Concordat for Research Integrity  
<https://www.lincoln.ac.uk/home/researchatlincoln/researchethicsandintegrity/>
- Internal webpages updated to provide practical guidance and links
- Development of training material to support the Research Ethics process – incorporating aspects of Research Integrity where relevant
- Updates as required via the Research and Industrial Partnerships newsletter / all staff emails and news.
- The Research Governance Manager has delivered the following training sessions (virtually due to the COVID-19 pandemic)

Human Tissue Training - SOP compliance training	4
Ethics reviewer training - reviewing applications	47
Ethics system training - for reviewers	144
UG/PGT Research Integrity and Ethics Training	Undertaken at local level
Research Integrity in Practice (Pilot)	22
PGR Research Integrity and Ethics training	91 (via induction)
Staff Research Integrity and Ethics training	33

### Action Plan for 2021/2022:

- Increase engagement awareness amongst staff and PGR students by undertaking Research Integrity and Ethics promotional campaign
- Complete UKRIO Self-Assessment Tool for The Concordat to Support Research Integrity V2.0. Undertaking a gap analysis and RAG rating highlighted areas for improvement.
- Implement Research Integrity in Practice (RIP) training and make available to all staff and PGR community. Identify academic colleagues to cascade training to UG/PGT community.
- Review the University's e-learning provision for Research Integrity and Ethics training.
- Develop and implement Responsible Research and Innovation Training to be made available to staff, PGR and CDT students.

## Research Misconduct

The Deputy Vice Chancellor for Research and Innovation has overall responsibility for research integrity, and the University's [Procedure for the Investigation of Misconduct of Research](#) (UKRIO) outlines the steps to follow in potential cases of research misconduct.

Professor Tim Hodgson (UKRIO Named Person): 01522 86159 or [tlhodgson@lincoln.ac.uk](mailto:tlhodgson@lincoln.ac.uk) while Professor Jon Whitehead (UKRIO Deputy Named Person): 01522 835886 or [jwhitehead@lincoln.ac.uk](mailto:jwhitehead@lincoln.ac.uk).

Further information may be sought from the university's Research Governance Manager Sam Lewis by emailing [samlewis@lincoln.ac.uk](mailto:samlewis@lincoln.ac.uk).

### Summary of Investigations of Research Misconduct

When investigating allegations of research misconduct, the University follows its *Procedure for the Investigation of Misconduct of Research*.

The table below sets out the overview of investigations and findings in relation to research misconduct covering both staff and postgraduate research (PGR) students.

20/21 Number of allegations of research misconduct: *2 dealt with at the screening stage.*

Academic Year	Number of formal investigations completed				Number of allegations upheld (in whole or in part)			
	17/18	18/19	20/21	20/21	17/18	18/19	17/18	18/19
<b>Fabrication</b>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Falsification</b>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Plagiarism</b>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Misrepresentation</b>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Breach of duty of care</b>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Improper dealing with allegations of misconduct</b>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Other</b> (breach of research related policy, unprofessional behaviour, authorship dispute)	<b>1*</b>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Details of any allegations upheld in part</b>	n/a	0	0	0	n/a	0	n/a	0

*\*allegation dismissed after investigation panel*

Records of Investigations of Research Misconduct kept for 6 years in line with University of Lincoln JISC retention schedule.