

Code of Good Research Conduct

1. The University's Commitment

The University of Manchester is committed to fostering the highest standards of research integrity within a pioneering research culture that values knowledge-creation for its own sake, for the potential benefits it promises humankind and for the ways it enriches higher learning.

Researchers can expect of the University:

i. A strong commitment to research integrity from its senior management

Research Integrity is given priority in the University's [Research Strategy](#). Leadership for this priority is provided by the Academic Director for Research Governance, Ethics and Integrity.

ii. Clearly stated standards and expectations

This Code of Good Research Conduct sets out the University's expectations of its researchers (people who conduct research, including but not limited to: as an employee; as an independent contractor or consultant; as a research student; as a visiting or emeritus member of staff; as a member of staff on a joint clinical or honorary contract). It is supported by a suite of policies and guidelines clarifying the standards of good research practice expected by the University.

iii. Support to help researchers comply with standards of good research conduct

To provide administrative support to enable researchers to conduct research in accordance with the standards of good research conduct. For researchers required to comply with regulatory standards, the University's [Research Governance, Ethics and Integrity Team](#) provides information and support for individuals conducting research in regulated areas such as clinical trials and research involving human tissue, human or animal subjects.

iv. Support to develop excellent researchers

The University is committed to providing suitable learning, training and mentoring opportunities to encourage the development of its researchers. This includes mandatory [research integrity training](#) to be completed every 3 years.

v. Oversight of the implementation of the Code of Good Research Conduct

Research will be monitored or audited based on an assessment of risk so that the University can be assured of compliance with regulations and standards. The University will report annually to its Board of Governors on the implementation of its Code of Good Research Conduct.

vi. A robust and fair approach to dealing with allegations of research misconduct

The University is responsible for investigating any concerns about the conduct of research undertaken in its name raised about any of its staff or students, whether current or former, irrespective of who is funding or sponsoring the research in question (other than in exceptional cases where, for example, a student is also a member of staff of another organisation which will undertake its own investigation). The [Code of Practice for](#)

[Investigating Concerns about the Conduct in Research](#) may also apply to any person authorised to undertake research in the University or to use University facilities for the purposes of research (such as visiting, emeritus or honorary staff) and those carrying out research under the supervision/direction of a University of Manchester member of staff.

Where a concern about the conduct of research arises about a current student, this would normally be dealt with under [Regulation XVII](#), in accordance with the procedures outlined in [Academic Malpractice: Guidance on the Handling of Cases](#). However, if the alleged conduct affects a published piece of research work or the supervisor is implicated in the complaint then the Code of Practice for Investigating Concerns about the Conduct in Research would apply.

Definition of research misconduct and poor research practice

Research misconduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- a) **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) when proposing, carrying out or reporting the results of research;
- b) **Falsification** (the inappropriate manipulation and/or selection of research processes, materials, equipment, data, imagery and/or consents) when proposing, carrying out or reporting the results of research;
- c) **Plagiarism** (using other people's ideas, intellectual property, or work (written or otherwise) without appropriate acknowledgement or permission);
- d) **Failure to meet legal, ethical and professional obligations**, for example:
 - i. Not observing legal, ethical and other requirements for human research participants, animal subjects, human organs or tissue used in research, or for the protection of the environment.
 - ii. Breach of duty of care for humans involved in research whether deliberately, recklessly or by gross negligence, including failure to obtain appropriate informed consent.
 - iii. Misuse of personal data, including inappropriate disclosures of the identity of research participants and other breaches of confidentiality
 - iv. Improper conduct in peer review of research proposals, results or manuscripts submitted for publication. This includes 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 peer review purposes.
 - v. Misuse of research funds, equipment or premises.
 - vi. Mismanagement or inadequate preservation of data and/or primary materials where this could have a significant impact on the research or research outputs.
 - vii. Deliberately preventing the publication of research, for example by withholding data or by inappropriately withholding permissions.
- e) **Misrepresentation**:
 - i. Misrepresentation of data, including suppression of relevant results/data or knowingly, recklessly or by gross negligence, presenting a flawed interpretation of data.

- ii. Misrepresentation of involvement, including inappropriate claims to authorship or attribution of work and denial of authorship/attribution to persons who have made an appropriate contribution.
 - iii. Misrepresentation of interests, including failure to declare competing interests of researchers or funders of a study.
 - iv. Misrepresentation of qualifications, experience and/or credentials.
 - v. Undisclosed duplication of publication (self-plagiarism), including undisclosed duplicate submission of manuscripts for publication.
- f) **Improper dealing with allegations of research misconduct:** failure to address possible infringements, such as attempts to cover up misconduct and reprisals against whistleblowers, or failing to adhere appropriately to agreed procedures in the investigation of alleged research misconduct accepted as a condition of funding.
- g) **Multiple/serial instances of poor research practice** that collectively amount to significant deviation from accepted practice.

Honest errors and differences in, for example, research methodology or interpretation do not constitute research misconduct.

Poor research practice includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- h) Failure to give appropriate recognition to others involved in research activity where this does not constitute plagiarism as defined above;
- i) Deviation from current accepted practice in carrying out research where this does not fit into any category described above;
- j) Mismanagement or inadequate preservation of data and/or primary materials where this does not fit criteria d) vi above.

2. The University's Expectations of its researchers

The University expects the highest standards of research integrity from the researchers it supports. This includes, but is not limited to, people who conduct research as employees; as an independent contractor or consultant; as a research student; as a visiting or emeritus member of staff; or as a member of staff on a joint clinical or honorary contract, irrespective of the sources of their funding, their area of research, their experience as researchers, whether they are lone scholars or members of a research team or where the research is to be conducted. It is the responsibility of all researchers and staff supporting research to conduct their research in accordance with the ten Principles set out below and in compliance with relevant University policies.

Principles of Good Research Conduct

i. Excellence

Researchers are expected to strive for excellence when conducting their research; aiming to design, conduct, produce and disseminate work of the highest quality and ethical standards.

ii. Honesty

Researchers must be honest in respect of their own actions and in their responses to the actions of others. This applies to the whole range of research activity including:

- applying for funding;
- experimental and protocol design;
- generating, recording, analysing and interpreting data;

- publishing and exploiting results;
- acknowledging the direct and indirect contributions of colleagues, collaborators and others;
- and reporting cases of suspected misconduct in a responsible and appropriate manner.

iii. Openness

Researchers must be open when conducting and communicating their research (subject to the terms and conditions of any research contracts and the protection of intellectual property and commercial exploitation). This includes:

- the disclosure of any conflicts of interest;
- the reporting of research data collection methods;
- the analysis and interpretation of data;
- making all research findings widely available (including sharing negative results as appropriate);
- disseminating research in a way that will have the widest impact;
- and promoting public engagement/involvement in research.

iv. Rigour

Researchers must be thorough and meticulous in performing their research. Care must be taken:

- to use the appropriate methods; and
- to adhere to an agreed protocol (where appropriate); when
- drawing interpretations and conclusions from the research; and
- communicating the results.

v. Safety

All research should be conducted in a manner which, so far as is reasonably practicable, is safe for researchers, participants, the University and the environment. Researchers must familiarise themselves, and comply with, the obligations set down by the University in its [policies and guidelines](#), as well as relevant legislation and regulatory practice in this area.

vi. Ethical responsibility

Researchers should have respect for all participants in, and subjects of, research including [humans, animals](#), the environment and cultural objects. The University expects all researchers to consider the ethical implications of their research and to be aware of their [responsibilities to society](#), the environment, their profession, the University, research participants and the organisation(s) funding the research.

vii. Responsible management

Established researchers are responsible for nurturing researchers of the future; fostering a constructive and supportive environment without undue pressure and ensuring that appropriate supervision, mentoring and training are provided.

[University's Dignity at Work and Study Policy](#)

[The Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy](#)

[The Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers](#)

[Research Degrees and Researcher Development](#)

viii. Regulatory compliance

Researchers are expected to make themselves aware of, and comply with, any legislation or regulations that govern their research. This includes, but is not limited to:

[Data Protection](#)
[Clinical Trials Regulations](#)
[Human Tissue Act](#)

ix. Professional standards

Researchers should observe the standards of practice set out in guidelines published by professional societies, funding agencies and other relevant bodies, where appropriate and available. Researchers must ensure that they have the necessary skills and training to conduct their research.

x. Report research misconduct

Researchers should be aware of the extreme seriousness of research misconduct. Staff and students of the University have an obligation to report suspected research misconduct in accordance with the University's [Code of Practice for Investigating Concerns about the Conduct of Research](#).

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