SENATE

Title of paper: Research Integrity Annual Statement

Main purpose of the paper: For decision

Presenter(s): Stacey Wagstaff, Research Integrity and Compliance Manager

Date of paper: 08/10/26

Purpose of the paper

The Research Integrity Annual Statement provides assurance that the University has appropriate systems, policies and processes in place to promote and maintain high standards of research integrity. It also evidences compliance with sector expectations, including the UK Concordat to Support Research Integrity, which places responsibility on institutions to provide transparent reporting and oversight of research integrity arrangements.

Relation to strategy and values

Adherence to NU commitment as signatories of the Concordat to Support Research Integrity

Recommendations:

Approve annual statement to go to Council

Consultation to date (including any previous committee consideration and its outcome): Approved by URIC on 20th October 26 and EB on 10th November 26.

Information Classification: (policy available here)

☐ Strictly Confidential – Information that is deemed of higher risk if inappropriately disclosed. This can include information defined as 'Special Category' information in the UK GDPR.

☐ Confidential – Sensitive information that could cause harm to the University if disclosed and should be limited to specific groups within the University. Includes personal data and commercially sensitive information.

☒ Internal – Information intended for use by internal colleagues or trusted third parties.

Annual statement on research integrity 2025-26

If you have any questions about this template, please contact: riconcordat@ukcori.org.

Section 1: Key contact information

Question	Response
1A. Name of organisation	Newcastle University
1B. Type of organisation: **higher education institution/industry/independent research performing organisation/other (please state)**	Higher Education Institution
1C. Date statement approved by governing body (DD/MM/YY)	Approved by URIC 20/10/26 Approved by Senate xx/xx/xx
1D. Web address of organisation's research integrity page (if applicable)	www.ncl.ac.uk/research/research-governance/research-integrity/
1E. Named senior member of staff to oversee research integrity	Name: Name: Professor Matthew Grenby, Pro-Vice Chancellor for Research & Innovation
	Email address: matthew.grenby@ncl.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: Stacey Wagstaff, Research Integrity and Compliance Manager
	Email address: research.integrity@ncl.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

There are a wealth of institutional policies and procedures that are designed to promote a culture of research integrity at Newcastle University and enable researchers to understand and act according to expected standards and behaviours. The majority of these policies can be viewed on our external webpages.

As part of a University-wide transformation project, research systems are being reviewed, improved and in some instances replaced. One of the aims of this transformation project is to make our processes more efficient and release quality time for researchers and research supporting colleagues. As part of these efforts, our current research information system (CRIS), MyImpact, will be replaced with Symplectic Elements.

The University became a signatory of the San Francisco Declaration on Research Assessment (DORA) in 2017 and has published a corresponding Responsible Use of Research Metrics policy statement with a yearly action plan; our commitment to DORA and the responsible use of research metrics was reaffirmed this year in our Research Excellence Framework (REF) 2029 Code of Practice document.

Communications and engagement

Information about institutional policies and procedures, including the University's Code of Good Practice in Research, is provided to new students and colleagues as part of their formal induction programme. Details of research and research-related

policies are available to view online on the University's Research Governance and Student Policies, Procedures and Regulations webpages.

Colleagues can also access information about people-oriented policies and procedures via the University's internal SharePoint pages. Any changes to policies and guidance are communicated via a variety of internal communication channels, including faculty newsletters, plasma screens across campus, Microsoft Teams channels, direct emails and attendance from the central Research Policy, Intelligence and Ethics (RPIE) team at applicable faculty and school meetings. The research community is encouraged to contribute towards the review of existing policies and the development of new policies and guidance. To ensure changes are made from an institutional standpoint, and not just in isolation for research, this academic year we have created a Governance and Compliance Knowledge Exchange Group. The purpose of the group is to provide peer support for colleagues working in similar roles across the University and to ensure best practice.

Culture, development and leadership

Research Culture

The University's Research Culture Action Plan was launched in October 2022, and consists of five main 'pillars' that are central to a positive and inclusive research environment:

1) Have the time, space and opportunities to be creative and enjoy discovering new things.

2) Be supported in your career aspirations and decision-making, as well as your continuing personal and professional development.

3) Feel part of an inclusive, supportive and safe research environment, where you and your ideas can flourish.

4) Be encouraged to embrace best practices and new ways of working to improve the quality and reach of research, either your own or that of others.

5) Be recognised and valued for your diverse contributions to research.

The implementation of the Research Culture Action Plan is supported by an institutional programme of work and overseen by the Research Culture Development Group (RCDG), which reports to the University Research and Innovation Committee (URIC). The Research Culture programme is led by the Dean of Research Culture and Strategy, the Research Culture Manager, a dedicated Programme Manager, Research Strategy Manager, Senior Researcher Development Manager, Associate Dean for Good Research Practice and relevant activity leads. The following Top-Priority Projects were identified for the 2025-26 academic year:

- Behaviour Matters: develop a preventative approach to tackling bullying, harassment and all forms of discriminatory and inappropriate behaviour, and promote positive behaviours across the institution.
- Research Culture Maturity Framework: create and implement a new Research Culture engagement and reflection tool and share good practice. The Maturity Framework is published on our external website.
- Open Research: develop and deliver an open research training programme to promote openness across the research cycle and make research more

transparent.

- Reimagining Leadership: Wellcome Trust funded project that aims to build enhanced leadership capacity to enable psychologically safe and inclusive research environments.
- Research Integrity: promote and enhance training, tools and resources that support researchers in embedding research integrity throughout the entire research lifecycle.

Research Leadership

The named person with formal responsibility for research integrity at Newcastle University is the Pro Vice-Chancellor for Research and Innovation. Academic leadership in this area is also provided by the Dean of Culture and Strategy and the Associate Dean of Good Research Practice. The three Faculty Deans of Research and Innovation and Academic Unit Directors of Research are also responsible for research integrity within their local areas. From a governance perspective, accountability for research integrity sits with URIC, which is Chaired by the Pro Vice-Chancellor for Research and Innovation.

The University operates a shared model of responsibility for research integrity with support from Professional Services colleagues. This support includes the Research Integrity and Compliance Manager and Research Integrity Project Officer in the central Research and Innovation service, the three Heads of Faculty Research, technical staff working in research facilities, colleagues in the University Library and the Organisational Development team. On behalf of the Pro Vice-Chancellor for Research and Innovation, the Research Integrity and Compliance Manager is the first point of contact for anyone wanting more information on matters of research integrity. This information is publicly available on the University's Research Integrity webpage.

Researcher Development

As a signatory of the Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers, Newcastle University has a longstanding commitment to support the professional development of colleagues and students engaging in research at the University. Additionally, the University is a founding signatory of the Technician's Commitment, which aims to ensure visibility, recognition, career development and sustainability for technicians.

Individual learning needs, including those for Research Integrity are identified through annual appraisal processes for colleagues, and discussions between Postgraduate Researchers (PGRs) and their supervisors. This information is then used to inform training and development plans. To address training needs, Newcastle University provides a wide range of internal training, tools and resources to support the development of good research practices, including:

- Research Integrity e-learning programme – our e-learning provision is accessible to all students and staff and consists of a primary Research Integrity course, with supplementary modules on more specialised subjects, a Research Integrity: Refresher course and a newly added Experienced Researcher course.

- Open Research Programme – delivered both online and in-person as part of the UK Reproducibility Network (UKRN) Open Research Programme, this programme aims to accelerate the uptake of open research practices through training and the sharing of good practice.
- Research Ethics e-learning – this module provides colleagues and students with an overview of the University's research ethics policy and the ethical review process. It also covers the key principles of research ethics and provides guidance on potentially high-risk activities.
- Ethics Toolkit – designed to assist students and colleagues when completing ethical applications, the toolkit also provides a repository of useful resources.
- Faculty Postgraduate Researcher Development Programmes – each of the three faculties provide a programme of training for PhD students, including introductory level workshops on good research practices, research integrity, ethics and data management.
- PhD Supervisor Development Programme – a quarterly workshop on 'Research Integrity, Ethics and Governance' was initially offered as part of a pilot scheme. These principles have subsequently been embedded in the introductory workshop on 'What makes a Good Supervisor?', which forms part of the University's new mandatory PhD Supervisor training programme, and includes a refresher pathway for experienced researchers.
- Smart Support Programme – aimed at Professional Service colleagues, this rolling programme includes workshops on research integrity and open research.
- Academic Skills Kit – guidance and support on referencing and how to avoid plagiarism is available for students from the University Library, via the Good Academic Practice Hub and Your Skills programme of workshops. Dedicated one-to-one support sessions are also available.
- Research Project Leads Programme – an annual programme of sessions aimed at upskilling new research leads. Topics include good research practice, research integrity, trusted research, open research and research culture.

Through institutional membership of the UK Research Integrity Office (UKRIO) and UKRN, the University also provides access to a wide range of external resources to support research integrity, such as webinars, guidance documents, case studies and workshops. Ad hoc training on a range of topics including research integrity, research ethics, trusted research, open research and research data management is also available on request.

Full details of internal and external guidance and development opportunities are summarised on the training, tools and resources section of the University's Research Integrity web page.

Monitoring and reporting

The University maintains a central record of participation in research integrity training. Although participation is not currently mandatory, uptake of research integrity e-learning is also recorded via the Epigeum member portal and made accessible to Heads of Faculty Research via a Power BI dashboard. The dashboard also includes attendance at in-person research integrity training sessions.

Responsible use of research metrics e-learning completions are recorded via the Learning Management System (LMS). Completions are shared with Heads of Faculty Research, with a Power BI dashboard in development.

Staff ORCID iDs linked with the CRIS and/or affiliated with the institution are monitored via a Power BI dashboard that is accessible to Faculty and School contacts.

The University Research Ethics Committee conducts an annual audit of ethics applications to provide assurance to Senate and Council that research activities are conducted in accordance with the highest ethical standards.

Confidential records of research misconduct proceedings are also maintained by the University for monitoring and reporting purposes. Anonymised data on the number and type of research misconduct is presented to URIC, Senate and Council on an annual basis. To promote openness and transparency, the University's Annual Statement on Research Integrity is published on the University's Research Integrity webpage. In accordance with the University's Procedure for Investigating Allegations of Research Misconduct, relevant third-party organisations (such as funders, journals, and professional and regulatory bodies) are also informed of any allegations which proceed to a formal investigation.

Trusted Research high-risk projects are recorded centrally by the RPIE team via a variety of routes. A due diligence process has been developed to help academics identify and manage potential national security risks when working with international partners. Individuals can submit a form to be reviewed by the RPIE team, who offer advice on how to manage those risks if the project is awarded. The RPIE team are also notified of high-risk projects at the application stage and at the point of publication.

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.

Over the last year, the following formal policies and guidance have been created or revised to support the research community:

- Policy and Procedure for Investigating Allegations of Research Misconduct – updated to reflect changes in the UK Concordat to Support Research Integrity
- Code of Practice for Freedom of Speech (internal access only)

- Research Grant Eligibility University Position Statement
- Newcastle Privacy Notice for Submissions for the Research Excellence Framework (REF)
- Guidance created for the University's Animal Welfare Ethical Review Body (AWERB) for when to refer non-animal related high-risk areas of an ethics application to a Faculty Ethics Committee for further review (formalising a previously informal process).

Investment in staff resources

Multiple fixed-term posts which were initially appointed in 2024 for 12 months have been extended until July 2027:

- Full-time, fixed-term Research Integrity Project Officer – this role works alongside the two Research Integrity and Compliance Managers, driving forward specific research integrity related projects. The Officer is the Project Lead for the Research Integrity Top Priority Project within the Research Culture Programme.
- Part-time, fixed-term Associate Dean of Good Research Practice – this role works alongside the Dean of Research Culture and Strategy and is the UKRN Institutional Lead and focusses on research integrity, open research and the responsible use of research metrics. The Associate Dean is the Sponsor for the Research Integrity Top Priority Project within the Research Culture Programme.
- Full-time Researcher Development Manager- this role focusses on transitioning a previous Research Culture Top Priority Project, The Research Space, into 'business as usual' by sustaining and growing the platform focussed on professional and career development opportunities across the entire research lifecycle.
- Full-time Open Research Officer- this role focusses on one of the top priority projects, Open research, running training and engagement activities as well as growing the university network of Open Research Champions and hosting the annual Open Research Awards.
- Full-time Research Culture Project Lead- this role focusses on one of the top priority projects, Behaviour Matters. Which aims to develop a preventative approach to tackling inappropriate behaviours across the institution.

Training/guidance

An extensive amount of training and guidance has been developed and delivered over the reporting period. Examples of which include:

- Research Integrity training – our Research Integrity e-learning suite, provided via our Epigeum subscription was expanded to include the Experienced Researcher course. This course consists of eight modules on topics relating to leadership and research culture, research design and planning, and ethical and global collaboration that are designed to help senior researchers, principal investigators and research leaders strengthen integrity across the research lifecycle. Barriers to accessing the e-learning were removed via the implementation of Single-Sign On (SSO) in February 2026, making accessing the e-learning quicker and simpler. Given the expansion of the e-learning suite and the large number of modules now

available, e-learning pathways were launched in July 2026, to help colleagues and students navigate the suite and better focus their development. The pathways include introduction, refresher, and Wellcome Trust funded project pathways, as well as role specific pathways. Following the implementation of SSO, there have been 193 individual module completions. Building on the efforts undertaken during the previous reporting period, further comms, including those highlighting the new e-learning pathways, were issued to Wellcome Trust funded projects, to help ensure colleagues and students working on these projects have completed research integrity training via the e-learning or in-person training sessions. We are confident in the effectiveness of our Research Integrity e-learning provision as the Research Integrity course received an average score of 3.8/5 for both its effectiveness and across all surveyed questions as a whole.

- Smart Support Programme – an annual programme of dedicated training for Professional Services colleagues on topics including Research Integrity and Open Research. This year the session formats included a mix of pre-recorded content and interactive in-person workshops.
- Ethics e-learning – bespoke e-learning on research ethics at Newcastle University is available via our LMS. Previously, this e-learning could only be accessed by staff and PGRs, however, in July 2026 it was made available to Undergraduate and Postgraduate Taught students via the Academic Skills Kit.
- Responsible Use of Research Metrics e-learning – online training for the responsible use of research metrics has been developed and is available via our LMS. The e-learning includes pathways detailing its relevance to colleague roles. The training is compulsory for colleagues involved in REF preparations and decision-making, as set out in the University's REF 2029 Code of Practice. Following its launch to colleagues involved in REF from April 2026, and its circulation more widely in June 2026, there have been 160 e-learning completions. There have also been efforts to embed the e-learning as part of a responsible use of research metrics statement across relevant university documents, guidance, and resources, including REF and Promotions materials.
- Research Visibility – several training sessions were held over the last academic year, demonstrating to researchers how to improve the visibility and discoverability of their research, including through ORCID iDs and Scopus profiles. In the wake of these sessions, a research visibility training video was created and further resources, including narrative CV guidance, were added to the Research Profile webpage.
- Open research training – ongoing delivery of workshops in core open research practices provided for colleagues, PhD students and their supervisors. A new workshop on 'Open research for PGR supervisors' is now embedded in the Supervisor Development Programme. Supported colleagues participating in UKRN train-the-trainer courses subsequently delivered 12 specialist workshops for 233 attendees in 2025/26. At the end of the UKRN open research programme Newcastle University had delivered training to more attendees than any other participating institution (500+).
- The Research Space – this is a central platform for researchers at all career

stages, and for those who support research. The Research Space brings resources together in one place, with built in Teams and modern SharePoint, it provides easy access to training and development opportunities, tools, policies, and guidance, saving time and making it easier to find the right support at every stage of the research lifecycle. The Research Space has grown from 750 members to over 1200 during this reporting period.

Other initiatives

- ORCiD promotion and integration – to help improve transparency and accountability, and to enhance trust in research, support recognition and encourage collaborations, the University has carried out a large-scale project promoting the use of ORCID iDs. This ongoing project has made significant progress in increasing linked and affiliated iDs on University systems, from 84% of research only and research and teaching colleagues at the time of the last report, to 96% by July 2026. To achieve this increase, numerous comms waves were issued, four ORCiD support drop-ins were held this academic year, and individual support sessions were routinely offered and delivered upon request. Additionally, targeted comms to PGRs and Technicians were issued, with visible support from senior Technical leadership for the latter. These comms complemented PGR and Technician specific training sessions. University-wide and local unit comms were inclusive of Professional Services colleagues.
- Research ethics – an in-depth mapping of our existing ethics processes across central services, faculties and AWERB was completed in consultation with Professional Services and Academic colleagues. The mapping highlighted some immediate areas for improvement; following the mapping exercise the Research Integrity and Compliance Manager worked closely with convenors and reviewers to formulate best practice and to standardise certain tasks across all ethics committees.
- Responsible Use of Research Metric Special Interest Group (SIG) – the SIG has continued to meet regularly to discuss and implement actions for the responsible use of research metrics implementation plan. The SIG consists of 19 members drawn from Academic and Professional Services staff from across all faculties and is Co-Chaired by the Research Integrity Project Officer and Deputy Medical Sciences Librarian. This academic year, the SIG created a Glossary of Terms document to define key terms in the University's responsible use of research metrics statement, and to contextualise the terms in relation to research metrics and related University policies and statements. The SIG also made its work more transparent internally with a refreshed internal webpage, featuring a membership list, meeting minutes, Terms of Reference, signposting to training and resources, examples of previous actions undertaken by the SIG, and an invitation to join the committee to all job families. The external Responsible Use of Research Metrics webpage and Library Research Services Research Metrics webpage have been updated to ensure the resources, training and information across these pages and the internal SIG page are consistently signposted. The SIG has also been reaching out to People Services, Reward, Recruitment, Doctoral College, Organisational

Development, and Faculty representatives to embed the responsible use of research metrics statement (including a link to the e-learning) across the university.

- NU Technicians Awards – in December 2025, the university hosted its inaugural NU Technician Awards. The event brought together Professional Services colleagues, Academics, and senior leaders to celebrate the vital contributions of our technical colleagues, who deliver, enable, and support research and education across all disciplines at Newcastle University. The awards received 128 nominations, with eight awards presented.
- Research Integrity project volunteers – following a call for volunteers, 26 colleagues and students were recruited for the Research Integrity Project, including PGRs, Technicians, Professional Services, and Academics from Early Career Researchers to senior research leaders, demonstrating the breadth of interest and engagement with research integrity across our research community. Volunteers provided input to actions for the project focus areas of induction mapping, ORCID, research integrity training and the responsible use of research metrics, shared information with their respective units, and worked on specific research integrity topics of interest to them, including authorship guidance. The breadth of roles and experience provided by the volunteers was particularly useful for developing the research integrity e-learning pathways.
- Induction mapping, phase one – though this was not included as part of our future plans in the previous report, at the beginning of this reporting cycle it was determined that this exercise was a necessary focus area for the Research Integrity Project, to ensure that colleagues and PGRs are aware of their research responsibilities, equipped with knowledge of where to access key policies, guidance, tools, and resources, and are provided with a comprehensive and consistent induction experience across the institution. The following roles were included in the mapping exercise: PGRs, Research Associates/Assistants, Technicians, Academics, Research Fellows, Research related Professional Services roles, and Visiting Research Staff.
- AI Policy and Procedure Group (AIPPG) – this group has been created to ensure a cohesive institutional approach for the use of AI in education, research, and Professional Services.
- Comms list – a comms list was developed, encompassing contacts for all Schools, Faculties, Institutes, and international campuses, as well as lists specific to PGRs and Technicians, to allows for more targeted and tailored comms. The effectiveness of this resource is evinced by the number of Research Integrity project volunteers, the ORCID iD percentage increase, and uptake for the responsible use of research metrics e-learning.
- Research Culture Maturity Framework – an evaluation framework designed to help units reflect on their current research culture, reflect on what is working well, and identify priorities for improvement. Open research and research integrity are headline themes of the framework, which encompasses research security, ethics, and responsible research assessment also. The resources and training provision provided by the University have been collated in a team offer available for units to access as they decide upon their priority areas.

- Open Research Champions Network – the network has grown to 30 champions, including academics and researchers from all faculties and across a range of disciplines as well as colleagues from professional and technical services. The champions have helped promote and advocate for open research in their units, co-delivered training, provided feedback on changes to funder policies, and collaborated to organise and deliver the Newcastle University Open Research Conference.
- Open Research Awards – following their postponement earlier in 2025, the Open Research Awards took place in November 2025.
- Open Research Conference – the second Newcastle University Open Research Conference was held in June 2026, with a programme including data skills, open access beyond the traditional, open research and Artificial Intelligence, and research data.
- ReproducibiliTea Journal club – a monthly programme of informal, interdisciplinary meetings to discuss approaches to open and reproducible research. 5 meetings were held in the 2025/26 academic year.

External engagement

Newcastle University colleagues have actively participated in a range of external activities as part of our commitment to share knowledge and develop communities of practice. Examples include:

- The Research Integrity and Compliance Manager attended the Russell Group Research Integrity Forum in Manchester in September 2025, and in March 2026 we hosted the Forum at Newcastle University. This event gave us the opportunity to showcase the work we are doing as part of the Research Integrity Project, Research Culture Maturity Framework, and wider Research Culture Development Programme; there was particular interest from attendees in The Research Space and the research integrity e-learning pathways.
- Further CONNECT funding was secured to allow the Babraham Institute, with the support of Newcastle University, to expand their offer of discipline specific research integrity training to other institutions. We presented at an in-person training day on the learnings from the previous CONNECT project, with an academic from our university's Biosciences Institute also participating.
- We continue to be active members of UKRN, responding to requests for information and taking part in various initiatives. Prof Natasha Mauthner, Associate Dean of Good Research Practice, was appointed as an Institutional Lead and representative to the UKRN Supervisory Board in May 2025.
- In July 2026, we presented at the UKRN conference in Manchester with a case study on open research training at Newcastle University and a workshop on developing an N8 guide to open research for PGRs and ECRs.
- We participated in UKRIO pilot training on research misconduct and provided feedback on the training content. We also participated in their workshop on developing a core procedure for investigating allegations of research misconduct.
- We provided feedback to UKRI on their proposed changes to the research

integrity annual statement template.

- In May 2026, the Research Integrity and Compliance Manager attended a RESTORE project workshop in Edinburgh. The project, funded by the Wellcome Trust, concerns the support for those involved in research misconduct investigation processes.
- The Research Integrity and Compliance Managers and Research Integrity Project Officer are now members of a newly formed peer support network, the North East Research Ethics and Integrity Forum.
- We hosted the national-level Technicians Partnership Conference 2026. Our central research integrity team led two of the breakout sessions, delivering sessions on research integrity for technicians and ORCID iDs for technicians.
- The research integrity e-learning pathways were shared with and positively received by Russell Group Research Integrity Forum members. Individual meetings with representatives from Oxford University and Leeds University were held to further discuss the pathways.
- Nottingham University Practice Sharing Visit – colleagues from across the university, including the Research Integrity Project Officer, met with representatives from Nottingham University to share best practice and identify areas for collaboration.
- Newcastle Health Research Partnership Academy Fellows Forum ORCID Information Session – a briefing on ORCID, including how users can make the most of their ORCID profiles, was delivered to Newcastle University, National Health Service and Northumbria University staff and students.
- UKRIO Research Integrity training testing – the Research Integrity Project Officer and a Research Integrity Project volunteer reviewed and provided feedback on the new iteration of this e-learning.

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.

Progress has been made in several areas which were identified as actions in the university's 2024/25 Annual Research Integrity Statement, including:

- Research Integrity e-learning changes – SSO and e-learning pathways have been implemented, with the training subsequently relaunched.
- CONNECT project with The Babraham Institute – this project has been completed, and we now have a bespoke, discipline-specific research integrity training package for colleagues in our Biosciences Institute. We delivered two dedicated training sessions in the last academic year, one for Principal Investigators and research leads and one for PGRs, ECRs and Technicians. These sessions were delivered by central university research integrity experts and a Biosciences academic. Offering support to other disciplines to follow this model and create their own bespoke research integrity training is now part of the central team's offering.
- Continued engagement with the UKRN Open Research Programme via the Open Research Awards, open research training and ReproducibiliTea Journal Club. As well as the completion of the Open Research Champions network pilot.
- Created video interviews with open research champions and supported colleagues to be filmed.
- Collaborative development of shared N8 guides on 'getting started with open research' for PGRs and ECRs.
- Responsible Use of Research Metrics – the responsible use of research metrics statement was finalised, and e-learning was developed as planned. The training and e-learning have been embedded in some areas, with further embedding to take place as part of wider transformation projects, and during phase two of the induction mapping process.
- Coalition for Advancing Research Assessment (CoARA) membership –while we are fully committed to the principles of responsible research assessment and the responsible use of research metrics, we have decided that this is not the right time to become a CoARA signatory. We are already making excellent progress through our existing programme of work, and developing a formal CoARA action plan would create significant additional workload, without substantially altering our current direction. Our priority is to continue advancing this agenda through the activities already in place.
- Research Integrity Project – this academic year the project focused on research integrity training, the promotion of ORCID iDs, the responsible use of research metrics, and induction mapping. Volunteers for the project were recruited from a variety of roles and career stages, and several project meetings were held for the volunteers to provide input and receive updates.
- Induction Mapping, phase one - Research inductions have been mapped for core units, including the central provision, faculties, schools, institutes, and international campuses. Some supplementary units, such as research centres beyond the core units also participated, though the majority of centres confirmed that their induction provision is dealt with at the school/faculty/institute level, and so were not relevant for inclusion.

Planned actions still in progress

The following actions were delayed due to operational reasons:

- MyImpact replacement - The implementation of the new CRIS has taken longer than anticipated, with the deadline to link ORCID iDs with MyImpact and the migration of iDs to the new system resultantly delayed to align with the shutdown of MyImpact in September.
- Induction mapping, phase one – while it was initially planned that all of phase one would be complete this academic year, from ongoing Centre for Doctoral Training (CDT) pilots, it became apparent that there is significant amount of overlap with their inductions and faculty and school induction provisions. Hence, it was determined that it will be more efficient to approach CDTs, Doctoral Training Partnerships (DTPs), Doctoral Training Centres (DTCs), and Doctoral Landscape Awards (DLA) now that phase one is complete for schools, faculties and institutes, to avoid duplication of work and to make this a more efficient process for them. Some of these also have a finite duration with approaching end dates, and so will not be worthwhile including in the mapping. A similar approach will be taken with the National Institute for Health Research (NIHR); due to the complexity of its structures, it will be beneficial for the core mapping to be completed first.

Plans for future developments

- Continued engagement with the UKRN Open Research Programme via the Open Research Awards, open research training and ReproducibiliTea Journal Club. The Open Research Champions network project will transition to business as usual.
- Research Integrity Project – research integrity will continue to be a Top-Priority Project within the Research Culture Programme in the 26/27 academic year. It is anticipated that the project will transition to business as usual.
- Research Ethics System – a new system has now been procured via Worktribe and preparatory work is underway for system implementation, which is scheduled for Autumn 2027. The new ethics system is now part of a wider shift to Worktribe; our current research grants and contracts system will also be replaced.
- The use of AI in research, ethical concerns regarding its use and ethics reviewers' knowledge around the use of AI are recurring issues. In response to these concerns, a workshop is planned for September 2026 with ethics convenors and reviewers from across the University to consider our institutional position on key ethical issues that arise from the use of AI in research.
- The creation of a fair attribution policy/guidance aimed at improving the acknowledgement of the contributions made by technical colleagues.
- Induction mapping, phase two – phase two will focus on the essential and recommended content that should be included in all research related inductions. This content will then be embedded in all forms of induction identified during phase one and tailored to role pathways. Induction mapping phase two will be used to further embed resources developed as

part of the Research Integrity Project, including research integrity e-learning pathways, the responsible use of research metrics statement and e-learning, and ORCID iD guidance.

- Research Integrity training – the effectiveness of efforts to increase engagement, including the implementation of pathways and SSO will be analysed further next academic year, however early signs are promising that they have helped to increase participation in the training. E-learning will be embedded further via phase two of the induction mapping exercise. A new Power BI dashboard is being developed to account for the updates to the e-learning programme. Demand for training sessions due to the Research Culture Maturity Framework will be responded to accordingly.
- Further changes to the research misconduct policy and procedure are currently being drafted. The aims of these changes are to streamline the process, improve terminology, and ensure more support for both those carrying out and those involved in research misconduct investigations.
- Data Management Policy – updates to the policy to reflect changes in open research, the use of AI in research and the planned UKRI changes to Data Management Plan requirements.
- To create an institutional policy and guidance that reflects Human Tissue Authority and Health Research Authority requirements to ensure a clear and consistent framework for the management of human tissue across the University.
- To create an AI in research action plan, including governance, ethics, training, monitoring and evaluation. One of the key priorities of the AI Policy and Procedure Group for the next academic year is to ensure bespoke AI training is available for researchers.
- Creation of central guidance on the use of social media in research.
- Dedicated research misconduct training – training is planned for November 2026 for all those at Newcastle University who may be involved in handling breaches of research integrity and questionable research practices. This session will be delivered by an external consultant.
- Researcher wellbeing – more in-depth guidance on researcher wellbeing is being planned for ethics reviewers and will be added to our ethics toolkit. This is part of a wider push to include wellbeing support and signposting at researcher touchpoints across the University ecosystem.
- ORCID – the new CRIS launches in November 2026 with increased ORCID integration. We are aiming to increase the current percentage of research only and research and scholarship contracted colleagues from 96%. We are also working to ensure a smooth transition to the new CRIS, migrating iDs linked on MyImpact and creating new guidance to account for the system change. ORCID iD resources will be embedded further via phase two of the induction mapping exercise. We will also investigate ORCID Research Connect to determine if this approach will align with our new system to send automated reminders to colleagues who have not yet linked their iDs with the CRIS.
- Research Culture Maturity Framework – following pilots in some schools, the Maturity Framework is now being fully rolled out to all units. Areas that select research integrity, open research and responsible research

assessment as priority areas for improvement will receive a team offering of resources and training.

- Responsible use of research metrics:
  - Continue to embed the RUoRM statement and e-learning, including via the 2nd phase of the induction mapping project
  - Promote RUoRM e-learning to research leaders and governance groups, including Directors of Research, Postgraduate Research Directors, School Research Managers, Technical Mangers, Research Committees, Directors of Expertise, and Group Leads
  - Analyse current practices among units
  - Evaluate the impact of RUoRM training
  - Integrate RUoRM into the team offer for the Maturity Framework

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.

Open Research Champions Network

The Newcastle University Open Research Champion Network was established in December 2024 with the aim of empowering colleagues to promote and support open research from within their academic units. As such, champions are uniquely placed to facilitate grassroots change: they understand disciplinary norms and cultures, are sensitive to local constraints, and are seen as trusted peers for informal advice.

The network has grown steadily and now includes 30 champions spanning all faculties and many roles, including academics, researchers, research students, and professional and technical services colleagues, reflecting the shared responsibility for research culture. For the first time, we now have a champion from one of our international campuses, from Newcastle University in Singapore.

Collectively, our champions have made substantial contributions towards embedding open research practices across the University. Highlights include organising the inaugural Newcastle University Open Research Conference (now held annually), developing and delivering a significant amount of training for their colleagues and the wider university, and lobbying for open research within the university and externally (e.g. changing publisher policy). Champions have also contributed in many other ways, including serving on open research awards panels, reviewing changes to funder policies, and representing open research perspectives on research committees.

A formal evaluation at the end of the one-year pilot period highlighted both the value of the network and the challenges of driving culture change. Most champions

reported an increased awareness of open research among their colleagues, although fewer felt they had yet influenced day-to-day research behaviours at scale. The open research team is using these insights to refine how we support the network as it continues to grow and evolve.

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's policy and procedure for Investigating Allegations of Research Misconduct were updated during the last reporting period to incorporate changes from the revised 2025 Concordat to Support Research Integrity. Further changes are planned to improve the process and experience of those involved in investigations.

Where possible, colleagues are encouraged to raise any concerns with the individual, their Line Manager or the appropriate Head of Academic Unit in the first instance. Alternatively, concerns can be raised with the Research Integrity and Compliance Manager. If an informal resolution is not possible, formal complaints should be submitted in writing using the Reporting Allegations of Misconduct Form via an email to research.integrity@ncl.ac.uk alongside any supporting evidence. Although complainants are expected to include their name on any allegations they submit, any information provided will be treated confidentially. Anonymous allegations will be considered at the discretion of the University.

Any allegations relating to the research undertaken by University students will be investigated via the separate Student Academic Misconduct Procedure, which was updated in 2024. Concerns regarding the conduct of University colleagues may also

be raised in confidence via the University's Policy and Procedure on Public Interest Disclosure (Whistleblowing).

While the number of formal research misconduct cases listed below is limited, a significant number of issues have been dealt with on an informal basis, which gives us confidence that the reporting process is functioning effectively, and that colleagues are aware of how to access support and raise concerns. This academic year there has been a notable increase in research integrity related queries. We believe this increase is partly due to sector-wide changes and pressures but is also a result of our increased internal and external engagement in this area.

Anonymised lessons learnt from formal investigations of research misconduct

The University's Procedure for Investigating Allegations of Research Misconduct has been developed in accordance with funder and professional guidelines and consists of a number of informal and formal stages. No new formal student allegations were received during the reporting period. One student allegation raised in the previous reporting period was completed and reviewed by a Student Disciplinary Committee, with the student given a Final Warning in relation to plagiarism. One formal staff allegation was received in relation to misrepresentation; however, it did not meet the criteria for research misconduct and was therefore referred to the grievance process. One formal staff allegation of plagiarism was received and dismissed at stage two. At the time of reporting, there are two open formal staff investigations, both relating to authorship. No staff allegations received during the reporting period proceeded to stage three.

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	0	0	0	0
Falsification	0	0	0	0
Plagiarism	2	2	1	0
Failure to meet legal, ethical and professional obligations	0	0	0	0
Misrepresentation (eg data; involvement; interests; qualification; and/or publication history)	0	0	0	0
Improper dealing with allegations of misconduct	0	0	0	0
Multiple areas of concern (when received in a single allegation)	0	0	0	0
*Other**	0	0	0	0
Total:	2	2	1	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.**
N/A

Report completed by Stacey Wagstaff (Research Integrity and Compliance Manager) and Daniel Hinds (Research Integrity Project Officer) 8/10/26