



Annual Report on Research Integrity

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Purpose of Report: To confirm to the RVC Council that the College complies with the Concordat to support Research Integrity.

Recommendation: Council notes the Report

Background

The Concordat to support Research Integrity was introduced in December 2012. All UUK members are signatories of the Concordat and as part of our annual monitoring statement to UKRI/OfS we are required to confirm that we comply with the principles of the Concordat.

Institutional responsibility for ensuring the integrity of RVC's research lies with the Vice Principal for Research and Innovation (VPRI) and the Research & Innovation Committee (RIC), which reports to Academic Board. RIC is supported by two working groups, the Research Working Group (RWG) and the Innovation Working group (IWG), chaired by the Associate Deans for Research and Innovation, respectively.

The RVC has a number of policies and codes of practice to guide its staff and students in research integrity, namely: Policy on Good Research Practice; Guidance on Research with Integrity; Policy and Procedures for Dealing with Allegations of Research Misconduct. These documents are the responsibility of RIC and RWG, and have been placed on a triennial cycle of review and revision.

The RVC's "Policy and procedure for dealing with allegations of research misconduct" was updated and approved by Academic Board in 2023. The RVC's "Policy and Guidance on Good Research Practice" was updated and approved by Academic Board in 2024. The RVC's "Guidance on Research with Integrity" was reviewed, updated and approved by Academic Board in 2025.

Policies and guidance documents outlining our approach to compliance with the Concordat on Research Integrity are publicly available (<https://www.rvc.ac.uk/research/about/research-integrity>). The VPRI is the senior member of the RVC responsible for this area and the contact for anyone wishing to raise concerns about the integrity of research being conducted at RVC. We provide an anonymous comments box for feedback to the VPRI's office on issues affecting research integrity.

As part of our strategy to improve the research we undertake, the RVC is a member of the UK Reproducibility Network (UKRN), a peer-led consortium that aims to ensure the UK retains its place

as a centre for world-leading research, by investigating the factors that contribute to robust research, promoting training activities, disseminating best practice, and working with stakeholders to ensure coordination across the sector.

Professor Patrick Lewis is RVC's senior academic with responsibility for research integrity and, in this role, reports to the VPRI and acts as our UKRN Institutional Lead. Through the UKRN we have received support for a fixed term "Open Science Administrator", Danny Smith, who has been in post since the start of 2025. Danny is supporting enhanced training activities relating to Open Research and research integrity, and is coordinating with the Research and Innovation Office and the Library to improve training and access to open research and reproducibility. To support this aim, Danny has been made a member of the Research Working Group and has initiated a series of open research training events. Through the UKRN, the RVC has taken part in a nationwide survey of open research practise, with the results of this to be shared in December 2025.

Prof Ken Smith is chair of RVC's Research Concordat Working Group (RCWG). In April 2023 our application to retain RVC's HR Excellence in Research (HREIR) Award was successful. In September 2025 the RCWG submitted an application for renewal of our HREIR award, which involved reporting its internal evaluation of RVC's HREIR programme and publishing its new HREIR strategy and action plan for 2025-2028. As part of this plan, in 2025 RCWG developed and published the "RVC Code of Practice & Guide for Researcher Career Development and Management". The chair of the RCWG, and others participated in a Teams call with the HREIR reviewers in November 2025 and we anticipate hearing the outcome of our renewal application in the next few months. The Code of Practice, internal evaluation, action plan, and executive summary are posted on the RVC website [here](#).

All new staff and PhD students are expected to undertake "Research with Integrity" training (and the associated quiz) within 3 months of joining. This is supported by materials detailing current best practice that are tailored to the types of research undertaken at RVC and have been reviewed by the UK Research Integrity Office. The content of the quiz and supporting materials is currently being reviewed by the Research Working Group, with the aim of updating both during this academic year. Established staff are expected to refresh their training every 4 years. Staff and students' refresher training status is monitored and they are not eligible to apply for internal travel grants, or submit applications for ethical approval, if their integrity training is not up to date. All PhD students are asked at their annual appraisal in the absence of their supervisors whether they have any concerns about research integrity relating to their work and their response is noted on the appraisal document. Any issues are referred to the Head of Department and appropriate action taken.

In terms of our commitment to openness and transparency in the ethical use of animals in research and investigating their replacement, RVC was again successful in receiving a Leadership in Openness Award (2025-2028), a status that we have held continuously since 2019. This award is granted to organisations in recognition of their commitment to following best practice, embedding openness within their organisations, and making the aims of the Concordat on Openness in Research a reality (<https://www.understandinganimalresearch.org.uk/news/leaders-in-openness-2025-2028>). Oversight and governance of the College's Ethical Review process for Research continues to be provided by the College's Ethics and Welfare Committee and since July 2020 has been chaired by Suzy Lishman, who reports to RVC Council.

Investigations into allegations of Research Misconduct

Since last year's report, no investigations into allegations of research misconduct have been conducted under RVC's Policy for Dealing with Allegations of Research Misconduct.

Professor Oliver Pybus

Vice Principal for Research and Innovation

November 2025