University of Oxford annual statement on research integrity - 2023

As set out in its Strategic Plan (2018–2024), the University of Oxford is committed to enabling ambitious research of exceptional quality. The University acknowledges that research excellence must be underpinned by the highest standards of ethics and integrity, to ensure that research is reliable and trustworthy. The principles of honesty, rigour, collegiality, trust, transparency, and accountability are key to maintaining research integrity at Oxford. The University's commitment to research integrity is reflected and embedded in its institutional systems and culture and an ongoing programme of review and improvement. Support for research practice (of which research integrity is a key component) is one of three core pillars of the University's programme of support for research culture.

The University supports and abides by the principles of the UK Concordat to Support Research Integrity, which requires that all employers of researchers prepare and publish a short annual statement on research integrity. Past annual statements are publicly accessible from the Research Integrity and Practice web page.

This statement was prepared for the University's Research and Innovation Committee to fulfil this obligation, to summarise related policies, training and guidance available to support researchers and to report on activity and initiatives related to research integrity undertaken across the University in calendar year 2023. The statement was drafted and coordinated by Research Services, with contributions from Human Resources, the Proctors' Office, Bodleian Libraries, the Researcher Hub and IT Services.

This year's statement has used the model template developed by the UK Research Integrity Office, so the format of the information presented differs from previous statements.

Section 1: Key contact information

Question	Response
1A. Name of organisation	University of Oxford
1B. Type of organisation	Higher education institution
1C. Date statement approved by Research and Innovation Committee (on behalf of Council)	29 February 2024
1D. Web address of organisation's research integrity page	https://researchsupport.admin.ox.ac.uk/governance/integrity
1E. Named senior member of staff to oversee research integrity	Professor Patrick Grant, Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Research) – for research integrity email: patrick.grant@admin.ox.ac.uk

	Gill Aitken, Registrar – for allegations of research misconduct email: registrar@admin.ox.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: Kathryn Dally, Research Integrity and Policy Lead email: kathryn.dally@admin.ox.ac.uk

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2A. Description of current systems and culture

i. Governance of research integrity at the University of Oxford

The Research and Innovation Committee, chaired by the Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Research, and which reports directly to Council, has central responsibility for advising on policies which promote research integrity (also termed good practice in research). Its members include senior academic representatives from all four Academic Divisions, from Colleges, as well as student representatives. It has delegated responsibility to approve, on behalf of Council, the annual statement of compliance with the Concordat to Support Research Integrity.

The Registrar is the senior named officer within the University with designated responsibility for responding to allegations of misconduct in research. The Research Integrity and Policy Lead within the Research Strategy and Policy Unit (Research Services) is named as a contact for those wishing to raise, in confidence, concerns about the conduct of University research, before any formal allegation is made.

The University's research ethics policy requires that all research involving human participants and personal data be subject to appropriate ethics review. In the case of clinical trials or research involving National Health Service (NHS) patients, ethics review and approval must be provided via the NHS Research Ethics Committees. Other research involving human participants and personal data is reviewed via processes overseen by the Central University Research Ethics Committee (CUREC), which reports annually to Research and Innovation Committee, and by CUREC's sub-committees.

The University of Oxford's animal use policy requires that anyone involved in research that includes the use of animals is proactive in pursuing refinement, reduction and replacement in procedures involving live animals wherever possible. In addition, all researchers and animal care staff must ensure they engage fully in the approved ethical process of review and monitoring of animal-based research. The Animal Care and Ethical Review Committee (ACER) is required to report annually to Council on all activities concerned with research management and compliance with licensing.

The Research Practice Group (co-chaired by the University's Academic leads for Research Culture - Research Practice) is responsible for coordinating and overseeing the programme of work to strengthen research culture across the University as this relates to research practice.

ii. Policies, systems, and support

The Concordat to Support Research Integrity requires the University to have clear policies, practices and procedures relating to research integrity. A summary of the University's related policies is included as Appendix A. These policies are subject to ongoing review and Appendix A indicates which of these were updated in 2023.

The Academic Integrity in Research: Code of Practice and Procedure sets out the University's expectations and standards for research conduct for all its staff, students and anyone using the University's premises, facilities or funding for their research. The Code (available via the Human Resources website and the University's webpages on Research Integrity and Practice) also provides the University's definition of misconduct in research and sets out the formal procedure which will apply in the event of suspected misconduct in research. This procedure includes the timelines that will be followed when formal allegations are assessed and investigated.

Within the University, individuals are encouraged to challenge misconduct or poor practice in research and, before making a formal allegation of misconduct in research, to discuss concerns within their department or faculty as appropriate. Sources of advice and support on good practice for University members include:

- Supervisors
- College senior tutors
- Directors of graduate studies
- Heads of Department
- Research ethics committees
- Research Services, via the Research Integrity and Policy Lead, the Research Practice Team, and the Research Governance, Ethics and Assurance Team
- UK Research Integrity Office, of which the University is a subscribing member.

The University has also appointed five research culture facilitators (with funding support from the Research England Culture Enhancement Fund), based in the Academic Divisions, whose role is to support the development and implementation of the University's research culture strategy, and share learning and best practice.

iii. Training and development

Research integrity training is compulsory for all University research staff and students.

Online research integrity training (licensed from the company Epigeum) provides an introduction to research integrity.

The core introductory research integrity course has been designed to support researchers from all disciplines through some of the key issues that need to be considered when planning, conducting, and reporting research. The core course is compulsory for research students (either on graduate taught courses or studying for research degrees). There is a concise refresher version of the course available which is suitable for more experienced researchers (e.g. postdoctoral researchers and established academic staff).

Other supplemental modules are available (which only apply to certain types of research) covering:

- Research involving human participants
- Research involving animals
- Conflicts of interest
- Intellectual property
- Export controls

Separate training courses in avoiding plagiarism and harassment and bullying are also available, as is online accredited training in Good Clinical Practice and other training for clinical researchers.

All of these courses are freely available to any University of Oxford staff or student member and are widely promoted to researchers and students by Research Services, the University's ethics committees, Divisions,

departments, faculties, and Doctoral Training Centres, including at induction and related training events. Information about the training is included within Research Support, Divisional and departmental websites, and the research integrity courses are also signposted within ethics application forms and embedded within graduate student forms and processes.

Uptake and completion of research integrity training is monitored by the Research Practice team in Research Services. The number of research staff and students completing the online research integrity training is increasing steadily and in 2023, this was as follows (see final column with 2022 numbers, for comparison).

	Students	Staff	Total	(2022 total numbers)
Research Integrity core course	2923	1601	3658	(2708)
Research Integrity refresher course	105	491	558	(388)

A further breakdown, by Division, of staff and students taking the research integrity training is shown below.

Table 1. Research Integrity core course – completion numbers

	Continuing Education	Gardens, Libraries Museums	Humanities	MPLS	Medical Sciences	Social Sciences	University Administration and Services	Grand Total
Staff	36	16	107	498	624	339	72	1601
Students	179	4	415	788	588	1017	8	2923
Total	**214**	**16**	**454**	**862**	**1034**	**1211**	**79**	**3658**

Table 2. Research Integrity refresher course – completion numbers

	Continuing Education	Gardens, Libraries Museums	Humanities	MPLS	Medical Sciences	Social Sciences	University Administration and Services	Grand Total
Staff	20	3	15	44	305	135	8	491
Students	5		8	23	46	25		105
Total	**25**	**3**	**21**	**59**	**333**	**152**	**8**	**558**

There is a wide variety of in-person training and other professional development available related to research integrity and practice (e.g. Good Clinical Practice (GCP), human research ethics, animal research ethics, research data management, open access, research methodology, experimental design, research skills training). These are organised and delivered by the University's Academic Divisions[1], Departments and Faculties, Doctoral Training

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[1] Medical Sciences Division Skills Training, MPLS Division Training, Social Sciences Division Support for Researchers, Humanities Division Researcher Development and Training

Centres, Bodleian Libraries, People and Organisational Development, IT Services, Biomedical Services the Researcher Hub and Research Services.

A major focus of activity in 2023 has been to develop a body of core online training in good research practice to be freely available to all Oxford researchers (see information under 2B for further details).

iv.   Induction

o   Induction events for new research staff, organised centrally by the Researcher Hub, include a session about research integrity and good practice which is delivered by members of the Research Practice team. In 2023, eight of these events were delivered either online via Zoom (average attendance 42) or in-person (average attendance 25).

o   Termly induction events for new research staff organised by the Academic Divisions include sessions about research integrity and practice, delivered by members of the Research Practice team and the Research Governance Ethics and Assurance Team.

o   Bespoke induction events organised by Departments and Faculties include, on request, sessions about research integrity and practice which have been delivered by members of the Research Practice Team and the Research Governance Ethics and Assurance Team.

o   The Research integrity checklist, structured in relation to different aspects of research integrity, and reviewed annually, has been designed to assist supervisors and researchers not only to abide by the principles set out in the University's Academic Integrity in Research: Code of Practice and Procedure but also to engage in a broader dialogue about research integrity and good practice in research.

o   The Researcher's Trailmap, distributed and promoted via the Researcher Hub (and reviewed annually), has been designed to help Principal Investigators to have structured conversations with research staff about research practice and career development.

v.   Research culture

The University's research culture programme is centred on three pillars which have been adopted as a framework for investments and communications. These are:

o   Research practice: enabling researchers to do reliable, reproducible, transparent research
o   Valuing contributions: recognising diverse talents, skills, outputs, and activities
o   Careers: assessing research fairly, within an equitable working environment and supporting the professional development of researchers at all career stages

The pillars are necessarily interconnected and underpinning projects span more than one pillar. This statement has concentrated primarily on providing information about the research culture activities underway to support research integrity and practice.

vi.   Sector engagement relating to research integrity and practice

The University recognises the importance of collaborating with partner institutions, at a national and international level, to facilitate networking and good practice in how to support and encourage research integrity.

o   Members of Research Services continue to be active members of the Russell Group Research Integrity Forum, which seeks to share good practice and provide training, guidance and networking opportunities in

research integrity matters. The group operates virtually as a community of practice and also met at the University of Birmingham in October 2023. The Research Integrity and Policy Lead was a member of the organising group for this meeting.

o The Research Integrity and Policy Lead has continued to work with the League of European Research Universities (LERU) Research Integrity Policy Group, attending its meeting at the University of Leiden in November 2023 and also serving on a panel for the related LERU symposium entitled `Scientific integrity: transparency meets confidentiality'.

o The University has a longstanding annual subscription to the UK Research Integrity Office (UKRIO) and, via this, has access to additional training assistance, UKRIO guidance documents, a register of UKRIO advisers for misconduct investigations, and assistance in developing and enhancing University guidelines, procedures and training. UKRIO also provides confidential advice and assistance to Oxford staff and research students with questions and concerns about the design, conduct and reporting of academic research. UKRIO's popular training events are widely promoted within Oxford and well-attended by members of the University.

o Throughout 2023, members of the Research Strategy and Policy Unit were invited to participate in various national and international events about research culture and practice, to give related talks and to serve on discussion panels. For example, members of the Research Practice team presented at the International Research Culture Conference at the University of Warwick on `Putting research practice at the heart of research excellence at the University of Oxford'. This was followed up by an invitation to submit an article to Exchanges: The Interdisciplinary Research Journal (currently under peer review).

o The University is an institutional member of the UK Reproducibility Network (UKRN) and is an active participant in the five-year UKRN Open Research Programme.

2B. Changes and developments during the period under review

i. **Training and development**

o One of the key pillars of the wider University programme to advance research culture is providing enhanced support for research practice, including research integrity. This work is coordinated by the Research Practice Group supported by the Research Practice team in Research Services working closely with the Academic Leads for Research Culture.

A major focus of activity in 2023 has been to develop a series of online training modules in research practice, designed to supplement and enhance existing University training available and enable researchers to conduct reliable, reproducible and transparent research. These will be launched from early 2024 and will comprise modules covering the following topics: research integrity and governance; open research practices; research design; collaboration; research data; authorship, publication and practice; research impact and public engagement. Fully automated reporting through Power BI dashboards will capture tracking and feedback data on the research practice training courses.

o The Narrative CV (NCV) is a structured but flexible CV format that has been rolled out across funders nationally and internationally to reward a wider range of contributions to research. Oxford resources for completing a NCV have been produced and made freely available. Hundreds of researchers have attended training sessions, and the Careers Service will now be coordinating termly training and offer 1:1 CV workshops to researchers.

- As part of Oxford's commitment to and participation in the UK Reproducibility Research Network (UKRN), five UKRN Local Network Leads were appointed in 2023 to champion and support open and transparent research practices across the University. The new team of Local Network Leads are expanding Reproducible Research Oxford (RROx), the existing local network of UKRN at Oxford, which is a grassroots collective of students and staff aiming to grow awareness of open research across the collegiate University. They work closely with the University's Academic Lead for Research Culture (UKRN), and with colleagues in the Research Practice team in Research Services. The Local Network Leads are working collaboratively to engage and expand this community at Oxford via networking, training, and other events and activities. This will include maximising use of the University's Silver-level membership of the Software Carpentries.

- The Oxford–Berlin Autumn School on Open and Responsible Research 2023 was held in Oxford (and online) in November 2023. This week-long event aimed to train researchers in how to undertake open and responsible research practices, as well as how to advocate for and become open research leaders in their teams and disciplines. Over 50 doctoral candidates and early career researchers attended from around the world.

  Further information about the School is available here and over 600 people have since accessed the online materials and lecture recordings from the event. Researchers have been encouraged to make use of these resources to learn more about topics, including: meta-research, EDI in responsible research, responsible use of AI, free code and open data, reproducibility, research integrity, reporting guidelines, writing protocols, visualisations, crowdsourcing for research, research culture.

- The Oxford Festival of Open Scholarship (OxFOS), a two-week festival on open research, ran for the second time in 2023, aimed primarily at researchers and research support staff, covering a range of topical issues. 367 people attended 17 events across the fortnight. Recordings of the sessions are available from the Open Access Oxford website.

ii.   Clinical research and governance

- In 2023, the Research Governance Ethics and Assurance Team (RGEA) changed the hosting arrangements for the online Good Clinical Practice (GCP) course. It is now hosted on CoSy, the University's training course management system, and provides improved registration and tracking functionality.

- A previous audit by the RGEA Team indicated that University laboratories which manage samples from clinical trials would benefit from laboratory-directed GCP training. One of the actions from this audit was for RGEA to develop and deliver such a course. During 2023, a course was designed by RGEA, with input from the Oxford Vaccine Group, and presented to volunteers from various laboratories across the University as well as Oxford University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust (OUH). Course material is currently being updated in response to user feedback and RGEA plans to launch this as an in-person course in 2024.

iii.   Research ethics

- The University research ethics system was assessed in light of the challenges presented by Artificial Intelligence (AI) as described in the Ada Lovelace Institute report, Looking before we leap. The Research Ethics group is collaborating with Oxford researchers to develop recommendations for the Central

University Research Ethics Committee (CUREC) related to research involving Artificial Intelligence (AI), including resources for researchers and ethics committees.

o An online system for research ethics applications was procured from WorkTribe™. There will be a phased introduction of the system during 2024 and into 2025.

iv. **Open research**

o An Open Monographs pilot project ran from 2022–23, led by a working group, produced guidance for researchers on the requirements of the new UKRI policy for longform research, which goes live on 1 January 2024.

o Following the successful launch of a Rights Retention pilot in January 2022, the University updated its Open Access Publications Policy to incorporate rights retention on an opt-out basis. This would support researchers with Open Access compliance, particularly where this is not available through traditional publishing routes.

o A project scheduled for completion in summer 2024 will update Oxford's institutional research repository to improve the visibility and re-use of research outputs, and support for research data. Milestones include the extension of DOIs to multiple item types, increasing automated deposit for researchers, and improving long-term digital preservation provision for research outputs.

o The Open Access Oxford website was reviewed and updated for improved presentation, accessibility, and usability. User testing has shown that crucial information, University and funder policies, publisher deals, useful tools, training and contact details, is easier to locate and use.

o In October 2023, Open Access dashboards were launched which have been designed to assist Divisions and departments with developing strategies for promoting Open Access. The reports available provide information about:

  ▪ The Open Access status of publications authored by University researchers/academics
  ▪ Compliance with the REF Open Access policy, and
  ▪ Engagement with the University's request to Act on Acceptance

 The dashboards report has been viewed more than 2000 times.

o Symplectic Elements (Elements) is the University's system that holds details of publications, other research outputs, research grants and professional activities. A project was undertaken to increase the proportion of current academics in Elements who had a registered Open Researcher and Contributor ID (ORCID) in the system.

The method was to match 'pending' ORCIDS in Elements (i.e. that the system had suggested based on ORCIDs found in authored publications) with known ORCIDs in different Oxford systems.

The outcome was that an additional 2014 ORCIDS were able to be registered in Elements, with 5035 (previously 3021) current academics now having a claimed ORCID. This represents 54% of current academics in Elements (previously 32%).

Registered ORCIDs can be used for automatic claiming of publications with author ORCIDS in their metadata, resulting in increased completeness of publication data, and less effort for academics to maintain their Elements accounts.

v.   Research data management

o   In 2023, the Research Data Oxford website was relaunched. This is Oxford's central source of information and guidance on research data management and makes key information and resources available in a more accessible and appealing form. Feedback on the new version of the website has been positive; in a recent-user-testing exercise, 100% of participants said they would recommend the site to a colleague.

o   The Research Data Management Policy was reviewed and updated. The revised policy highlights FAIR data principles to researchers more directly and emphasises the benefits of data sharing. It also specifies that external repositories used for sharing of Oxford research data must support ORCID and DOIs.

o   Oxford launched its Research File Service (RFS), providing research data storage facilities for data volumes between 100GB and 20TB, and available across the University network as a shared network drive. New features will include allowing web access and adding group facilities that can include external users.

o   The renewal of the contract for the LabArchives electronic lab notebook service provided an opportunity to improve the functionality on offer to researchers. Larger files can now be stored using the service, and a new inventory feature is also now available.

o   A three-year subscription to DMPonline began. This will allow the enhancement of Oxford-specific guidance for the creation of data management plans.

vi. International research collaboration

o   In 2023, Council agreed a set of Research Collaboration Values for the University, setting out how the University collaborates with partners around the world equitably, safely and with integrity. The values are intended to be useful in informing internal planning and decision-making and also in communicating expectations and responsibilities to prospective external partners.

o   The University developed its internal Trusted Research campaign during 2023, enhancing awareness and understanding across the University, focussing on the high-risk technology areas in the Mathematical, Physical, and Life Sciences Division (MPLS). The MPLS Security Leads Network has been refreshed, building local Departmental capacity. Engagement has expanded to other areas of the University via the Medical Sciences and Social Sciences Divisions.

o   A new draft export control compliance process was developed and consulted on, and this will be piloted and reviewed in 2024.

o   The University regularly engages with the Research Collaboration and Advice Team in the Department for Science, Innovation and Technology (DSIT), participates in the National Protective Security Authority (NPSA) STEM Universities Forum, and collaborates with sector groups to share good practice.

vii. Emerging research policy issues

In 2023, Research and Innovation Committee discussed the impact of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in conducting, analysing and reporting research, considering its potential benefits and risks. It agreed revisions to University guidance on <u>Authorship and Publication</u> as a result of developments in AI tools, notably Large Language Models (such as ChatGPT). The University is continuing to develop its position on the use of AI in research.

viii. Research Culture

Many projects are underway to advance research culture, including improved support for research practice. Other research culture projects include the development of the <u>Academic Career & Reward Framework.</u> Led by the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (People & Digital), the aim of the project is to improve the career paths, workload, and reward and recognition of academics. The project team, comprising colleagues from HR, Research Services, Centre for Teaching and Learning, and the Divisions, and whose work is overseen by a senior steering group, has engaged stakeholders across the collegiate University in its plans and principles. The first three (of four) workstreams are in the data-gathering and benchmarking stage. Initial proposals will be presented to focus groups in 2024. Proposals will then be taken to Committees and proceed to formal consultation.

ix. Wellcome audit

In 2023, the University was audited by Wellcome and this investigated a range of non-financial requirements, including:

o The processes for handling allegations of misconduct in research and bullying and harassment, and for reporting any ensuing investigations to Wellcome (in cases where Wellcome has supported the research); and

o Assurance over the monitoring of completion of mandatory training and professional development (including in the areas of research integrity, EDI, biological safety) and the tracking of completion by research staff of such activity in line with Wellcome's policies.

The audit report noted the various University policies and frameworks in place and a University action plan has been agreed to implement the recommendations and actions arising from the audit, to ensure compliance with Wellcome's requirements. As part of this action plan, all Wellcome-funded Principal Investigators were contacted directly with a reminder of Wellcome's expectations around the completion of mandatory training.

2C. Reflections on progress and plans for future developments

The increase in uptake of (and demand for) research integrity and practice training is evidence of greater awareness of and engagement with related issues. The advantage of online training is that it provides University-wide access to generic introductory training. An ongoing challenge remains the ability to deliver discipline-specific training, at scale, to all researchers. A further challenge is presented by current systems for tracking and monitoring uptake of research integrity-related training which is largely currently delegated to individual departments. University IT projects in development (including training data dashboards) should improve systems for departments to monitor training completed via CoSY, the University's training course management system.

i. Training and development

As mentioned in 2B, the new Research Practice online training modules will be piloted in spring 2024 and subject to extensive user-testing. The full suite of training modules will be finalised and ready for launch at the start of academic year 2024–25.

In order to enhance research practice training for principal investigators and research group leaders, discussions are underway to provide a `master class' in research practice as part of <u>the Confident Manager training programme, delivered via the Researcher Hub.</u> This programme supports managers at all levels (including those managing researchers) in developing their insights and skills in people management excellence, including through peer-to-peer learning. <u>The intention is for this master class to be made available in 2024.</u>

ii. Research practice survey

In 2024, a University-wide survey of research staff and students will be conducted around good practice in research (including research integrity), which will serve to raise awareness of related policies and practices, but will also help to shape the development of future policy, guidance and training in research practice. The intention is for this survey to be run annually to be able to measure progress made in these areas as a result of improved support and training, but also to identify where there is still work to be done.

iii. Website plans

Web-based University guidance around Research Practice and Integrity is being updated, including providing a higher-profile web presence for this information. This information will then be hosted on the more accessible `Support for Researchers' web site at https://www.ox.ac.uk/research/support-researchers.

iv. Research culture

To aid clarity and consistency of approach across the University, and efficiency of resourcing, it is proposed to create a self-assessment research culture toolkit that could be used — at the level of department, faculty, Division, college, and University-wide — to identify where gaps might exist in how culture is supported and to surface existing good practice.

The toolkit will be designed in spring 2024 and refined through a pilot with a couple of departments/faculties in each Division, as well as some Colleges.

v. Support for reporting concerns

The University is keen to ensure that students and staff feel available to report incidents of inappropriate behaviour and that they can access support services.

In 2024, the University will launch a pilot of <u>Report + Support</u>, an online tool already in use by over 90 UK universities to provide access to support, guidance and services to staff who experience or witness bullying and harassment. Staff employed by the University will be able to use this tool to report an incident or seek support. They can report an incident anonymously or ask to speak to an advisor. The tool will be piloted for University-employed staff in the first instance, with the pilot running from January to June 2024. This will inform how best to integrate the Report + Support platform, and insights gathered through it, into the University's Harassment Advisory Services and Harassment Policy.

3A. Statement on processes that the organisation has in place for dealing with allegations of misconduct

As set out in the Academic Integrity in Research: Code of Practice and Procedure, the Registrar is the senior officer designated within the University with responsibility for receiving and responding to allegations of misconduct in research. When such allegations involve students, the Registrar may refer these to the University Proctors for further investigation (the Proctors having responsibility for the investigation of possible breaches of University disciplinary codes and bringing charges against students accused of infringing these codes). The Registrar is supported by the Human Resources Policy Advisor and the Research Integrity and Policy Lead in operating the Procedure.

The Procedure was last updated in June 2022 and will next be reviewed in 2025.

Any concerns, complaints or allegations may also be made under the University's Public interest disclosure (whistle-blowing) Code of Practice (updated in 2022).

The Research Misconduct webpage includes details of the relevant procedures and contacts for those with questions about research integrity or those considering raising concerns.

The Harassment policy (updated in 2023) sets out the process that will apply in the event that complaints of bullying and harassment are made against University staff or students. Further information about support and advice about bullying and harassment is available at https://edu.admin.ox.ac.uk/harassment-advice (which includes information about Harassment Advisors, who are available to support staff or students who feel they have been bullied).

See information in 2C above about the 2024 launch of a pilot of Report + Support.

3B. Information on investigations of research misconduct that have been undertaken

i.   Allegations notified to the Registrar

In 2023, the Registrar received a number of allegations of misconduct in research which were considered under the Procedure set out in the above-referenced Code. These are summarised in the table below and include details of three allegations which were received in 2021 or 2022, but where the ensuing reviews were concluded in 2023. The table does not include details of allegations received where it was either more appropriate for these to be addressed via a different process or where these were considered to be outside the scope of the Procedure.

No	Nature of alleged research misconduct	Outcome
1.	Unacknowledged appropriation of the work of others, including plagiarism (Allegation received in 2021; investigation concluded in 2023)	Allegations upheld Researcher has left the University but certain allegations related to research undertaken at Oxford. Formal investigation was undertaken by the institution employing the researcher, with representation and input from Oxford

2.	Failure to follow accepted procedures, legal, professional or ethical requirements (Allegation received in 2022; review concluded in 2023)	Dismissed after preliminary review – no evidence of misconduct but poor research practice
3.	Failure to follow accepted procedures, legal, professional or ethical requirements (Allegation received in 2022; review concluded in 2023)	Dismissed after preliminary review – no evidence of misconduct
4.	Unacknowledged appropriation of the work of others, including plagiarism	Upheld after preliminary review
5.	Failure to follow accepted procedures, legal, professional or ethical requirements	Dismissed after preliminary review – no evidence of misconduct
6.	Unacknowledged appropriation of the work of others, including plagiarism	Dismissed after preliminary review – no evidence of misconduct
7.	Unacknowledged appropriation of the work of others, including plagiarism	Upheld after preliminary review
8.	Falsification or fabrication of data	Ongoing
9.	Unacknowledged appropriation of the work of others, including plagiarism	Ongoing

ii. Allegations considered by the Proctors' Office

In 2023, the Proctors' Office investigated a number of student cases relating to research work submitted for examination, i.e. theses and dissertations, as well as extended research projects or essays. These are summarised below. There were two 'carry forward' cases from 2022 (cases 1 and 2) and six cases were ongoing at the end of 2023 (cases 5 to 10).

Cases 'not upheld' are those where, after investigation, the allegations were unfounded or amounted to poor academic practice, not warranting disciplinary action. Such cases are therefore returned to the examiners for finalising in the normal way.

No	Nature of allegation	Outcome
1.	Plagiarism	PGDip extended essay – ongoing
2.	Plagiarism	MPhil dissertation – upheld (mark of 0, resubmission, cap at a pass)
3.	Plagiarism	MPhil dissertation – upheld (mark of 0, resubmission, no cap)
4.	Plagiarism	UG Research Project – not upheld
5.	Plagiarism	DPhil extended essay – ongoing
6.	Plagiarism	MSc dissertation – ongoing
7.	Plagiarism	UG dissertation – ongoing
8.	Plagiarism	MSt dissertation – ongoing
9.	Auto-plagiarism	MSc dissertation – ongoing
10.	Auto-plagiarism	MSc dissertation – ongoing

In cases where the allegations of misconduct were upheld or poor research practice was identified, feedback and learning on these has been provided to the departments in question to identify concerns and assist with future training, mentoring, and induction processes for researchers

Appendix A

Policies and procedures for supporting and promoting research integrity

The University's <u>Academic Integrity in Research: Code of Practice and Procedure</u> (last updated in 2022, scheduled for review in 2025) sets out the University's expectations and standards for research conduct for all its staff, students and anyone using the University's premises, facilities or funding for their research. This Code also includes the University's definition of misconduct in research and the procedure which will apply in the event of suspected misconduct in research.

The Code states that it operates in conjunction with a range of other University policies, procedures and codes of practice relating to research integrity. These include the following:

- o <u>Research ethics policy</u>
- o <u>Policy on the use of animals in scientific research</u>
- o <u>Policy and procedure on conflict of interest</u> (reviewed and updated in 2023)
- o <u>Public interest disclosure (whistle-blowing) code of practice</u>
- o <u>Research data management policy</u> (reviewed and updated in 2023)
- o <u>Open access publications policy</u>
- o <u>Financial regulations</u>
- o <u>Intellectual property policy</u>
- o <u>Harassment policy (reviewed and updated in 2023)</u>
- o <u>Anti-bribery policy</u>
- o <u>Anti-fraud policy</u>
- o <u>Information security policy</u>
- o <u>Data protection policy</u>
- o <u>Export controls and research collaborations guidance</u>
- o <u>Safeguarding code of practice</u>
- o <u>Security sensitive research guidance</u>

These policies are subject to ongoing review to reflect changes in legislation, regulatory and funder requirements as well as evolving research practice.