

Research Integrity Annual Statement

2021-22

Research integrity is fundamental to all areas of research at Goldsmiths and across all career levels, from undergraduate and taught postgraduate research through to doctoral level and beyond into the professoriate. As a university community, we are committed to supporting honesty and transparency in all aspects of research, the adherence to any relevant disciplinary norms and standards, and ensuring that the wellbeing, dignity, and safety of research participants and our researchers are protected, alongside the reputation of the university.

The Research Ethics and Integrity Sub-Committee (REISC) oversees the development and implementation of policies and guidelines on research ethics and integrity. REISC also ensures that across the university there are robust procedures for the consideration and conduct of activities with implications for research ethics and integrity.

This public statement is intended to provide assurance that as a university we are committed to:

- supporting and strengthening understanding and application of integrity issues in research at all levels across the university
- having processes to manage and investigate allegations of misconduct that are transparent, robust and fair, and fit for purpose
- reporting on any formal investigations of research misconduct that have been undertaken, and on lessons learned from these investigations

This statement covers the period October 2021 to September 2022.

Supporting and strengthening understanding and application of research integrity issues

As face-to-face activities are gradually resuming following the Covid-19 pandemic, there has been growing engagement with research integrity issues, including through meetings between REISC and the university-wide network of research ethics and integrity leads in academic departments. During this process, we have reviewed departmental procedures in order to identify any gaps and put mitigation measures in place where necessary.

UK CORI in partnership with key bodies, notably the UK Research Integrity Office (UKRIO) and the Concordat to Support Research Integrity Signatories Group, has placed renewed emphasis on the impact of local culture on researchers' behaviour and on the production of high-quality research. In line with this, during 2021-22 Goldsmiths launched a Researcher Development Hub, bringing in one place information and resources on issues related to research ethics and integrity. The hub, which is managed by a central administrator, also serves as a repository of internal and external training events relevant to research and researchers. In addition, we launched an Early Career Researcher Network which provides a forum for discussion, engagement and mutual learning on research matters, including requirements, process and best practice in research ethics and integrity. This network is an exciting development with the potential to support in tangible ways our early career researchers as they learn how to navigate their roles and responsibilities, especially in participatory and/or practice-based research.

In 2021-22 we also began the development of an online SharePoint platform dedicated to research ethics and integrity. This new internal platform will provide better opportunities for streamlining guidance and support, enabling researchers to more easily access information, resources and training relevant to research ethics and integrity. The platform is furthermore intended to facilitate the process of using the College-wide research grants management system, Worktribe, for the review and approval of research ethics applications.

In addition to the above, in 2021-22 we held a series of training events on research ethics and integrity, research data management and protection, as well as using Worktribe for developing and submitting research ethics applications. These events involved REISC members, departmental research ethics and integrity leads, and researchers at all career stages, and offered multiple opportunities for learning, discussion and reflection. In relation to student research, REISC collaborated with the Graduate School to organise a roundtable on research ethics and integrity across disciplines. Working closely together, REISC and the Graduate School also updated the Student Research Ethics Form which must be completed and approved before postgraduate research projects can commence.

Processes in place for dealing with allegations of research misconduct

Goldsmiths' policy and procedure for investigating and resolving allegations of misconduct in academic research closely follow the UK Research Integrity Office's model and were developed with advice from UKRIO. The latest version of the existing procedure was adopted by the Academic Board in 2019-20 and is available here: <https://www.gold.ac.uk/media/docs/research/Research-Misconduct-Procedure.pdf>. It reflects Goldsmiths' context and is appropriate to its particular subject-mix.

Formal investigations of research misconduct

One allegation was received between October 2021 and September 2022, relating to a student project. The allegation was not taken to a formal investigation.

Lessons learned

The allegation received led to a review meeting, which identified the need for improvements to student ethical approval procedures at the departmental level. In order to enhance our preparedness for dealing with any future misconduct investigations, in 2022-23 we aim to create a standing pool of screening panellists from across the three Schools at Goldsmiths. The panellists will receive appropriate training on policies and procedures relevant to research misconduct.

The research environment

At all levels there is an emphasis on enabling staff, researchers and students to feel comfortable to report instances of suspected misconduct. This is also reflected in our investigation procedure, including the facility for an allegation to be made by an intermediary where the individual has reservations about making an allegation directly. The facility has been clearly communicated to our academic community through policy documentation, internal sites and trainings events.

Reviewed by Research Ethics and Integrity Sub-Committee, 18
September 2021 Reviewed by Research and Enterprise Committee, 22
September 2021 Approved by Academic Board, 30 September 2021
Reported to Council, 7 October 2021