University of Huddersfield annual statement on research integrity 2024/25

The University of Huddersfield subscribes to the principles of the Concordat to Support Research Integrity and is committed to excellence in all aspects of research. As an employer of researchers, the University acts in accordance with the commitments and the related responsibilities for employers of researchers as outlined in the Concordat. This includes fulfilment of the expectations held by funders of research for employers of researchers. The University policies, framework and procedures can be found on the University website.

This year's statement has used the model template developed by the UK Research Integrity Office with the Research Integrity Concordat Signatories Group.

Section 1: Key contact information

Question	Response
1A. Name of organisation	University of Huddersfield
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)	05/11/2025
1D. Web address of organisation's research integrity page (if applicable)	Concordat to support research integrity - University of Huddersfield
1E. Named senior member of staff to oversee research integrity	Name: Professor Monty Adkins
	Email address: m.adkins@hud.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: Becky Green
	Email address: r.l.green@hud.ac.uk

University of HUDDERSFIELD
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Section 2: Promoting high standards of research integrity and positive research culture.

2A. Description of current systems and culture

The University Research Committee (URC), chaired by the Pro Vice-Chancellor for Research and Innovation, which is responsible to the Senate, has central responsibility for ensuring the University's compliance with the Concordat to Support Research Integrity. Its members include senior academic representatives from each of the five Schools, as well as representatives from other key services. The Committee is responsible for progress towards the strategic objectives and targets set by the University in research and enterprise and support the development and implementation of new policies in line with those activities.

The Concordat to Support Research Integrity requires the University to have clear policies, practices, and procedures to support researchers as part of their commitment to embed a culture of research integrity. The University makes all related policies available centrally via our Policies and Procedures webpages, these policies are reviewed on a regular basis to ensure they remain relevant and fit for purpose. The *Code of Practice for Research* is designed to encourage good conduct in research and help prevent misconduct, to assist researchers to conduct research of the highest quality. The Code also outlines the University's commitment to leadership and development through maintaining and promoting an environment which supports research of high ethical standards mutual co-operation, professionalism, and the open and honest exchange of ideas. The Code is further supported by the Research Ethics and Integrity Policy, which reinforces the university's commitment to conducting research with the highest possible standards of integrity and practice. The University encourages the career development of researchers through a programme of mentoring and training opportunities.

Each School has a School Research and Innovation Committee (SRIC) which meets three times per year and provides a valuable opportunity for dissemination of information from the URC and any other relevant sources. The SRICs provide a copy of their minutes to URC and make clear any areas of support or guidance the SRIC might need.

2B. Changes and developments during the period under review

This academic year saw continued engagement with the Introduction to Research Integrity Brightspace module, now a compulsory component for postgraduate researchers (PGRs). A total of 190 individuals successfully completed the module within the past 365 days, while 19 did not meet the passing criteria. This reflects a strong uptake and reinforces our commitment to embedding integrity at the earliest

stages of research training. It is worth noting that PGRs cannot progress passed RSP stage without evidencing they have completed the training, therefore we are confident all progressing PGRs have undertaken this.

Following the discontinuation of our Epigeum contract, some PGRs may have completed the old training and some the new in this transitional period. Next year we will have two sets of data to compare moving forward. This transition aims to better tailor content to our institutional values and streamline the learning experience for PGRs.

Introduction to Research Integrity – Brightspace module

Passed in the last 365 days	190
Failed in the last 365 days	19

During this reporting period, the UK Research Integrity Office launched their online *Introduction to Research Integrity* course. As a subscriber institution of UKRIO, we will continue to roll out the access to this training to relevant research and research related staff.

In addition to the training options referred to above, all new members of research staff are provided with a comprehensive training offering managed through the HR People and Organisational Development Team, including training offered by services within Research and Innovation. Training is also in place within Schools, with research ethics training offered to all new academic staff along with existing staff who may wish to expand or refresh their knowledge on research ethics.

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.

Over the last 18 months a significant amount of work has gone into developing a strategy for embedding the importance of Trusted Research into our existing processes around Research Governance and Compliance. This work will continue into the next reporting year and is underpinned by a training module that was rolled out at the start of 2023/24. The training package has two components:

1. An introductory module which takes around 35 – 40 minutes to complete and is mandatory for all academic and research staff, practitioners, technicians, and identified professional services staff.
2. Advanced module options which provide a more in-depth look at Trusted Research Principles, IT security & Knowledge Asset Protection, and Legal and Regulatory obligations.

Section 3: Addressing research misconduct

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

As set out in the *Code of Practice for Research*, the Deputy Vice Chancellor has the responsibility for investigating allegations of misconduct in research by staff. The procedures for students are documented in the Student Handbook. The University's *Investigating Allegations of Misconduct in Research* Policy draws on the UK Research Integrity Office's *Procedure for the Investigation of Misconduct in Research* and is managed by Human Resources.

The Policy was last updated in March 2024 and will next be reviewed in March 2027.

In 2024/25, a new Stage 0 classification for misconduct cases was introduced. This stage allows for minor procedural corrections without triggering formal penalties, helping to reduce administrative burden and encourage common-sense resolutions. 12 cases were resolved at Stage 0 with no formal penalties applied.

At Stage 1, 2 cases resulted in "No case to answer," while 8 cases led to a Written Caution, primarily for self-plagiarism and procedural oversights. No cases escalated to Penalty 1, 2, or 3 this year, indicating a positive trend toward early resolution and fewer serious breaches.

	Plagiarism	Self-Plagiarism	Ethics	AI	Total
Total	**10**	**10**	**0**	**2**	**22**

Figure 1 Total number of cases

Stage of Misconduct	No case to Answer	Written Caution	Penalty 1	Penalty 2	Penalty 3	Total
Stage 0	0	12	0	0	0	**12**
Stage 1	2	8	0	0	0	**10**
Stage 2	0	0	0	0	0	**0**
Stage 3	0	0	0	0	0	**0**

Total	**2**	**20**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**22**

Figure 2 Breakdown of cases by stage

The School of Computing and Engineering continues to report the highest number of cases, particularly in plagiarism and AI-related concerns. The inclusion of AI as a category reflects evolving challenges in academic integrity and the need for updated guidance and oversight.

Reflections and Forward Planning

The introduction of Stage 0 has already shown promise in reducing unnecessary escalations and improving procedural efficiency. The overall number of formal cases remains low, and the absence of high-level penalties this year suggests that the preventative measures, especially training and early-stage interventions, are having a meaningful impact.

As the transition is made to the in-house Research Integrity Course, it is anticipated that there will be an even greater alignment between training content and institutional expectations. It will be essential to continue the collaboration with Schools to ensure consistent messaging and support for PGRs navigating research ethics and compliance.