Annual Integrity Statement 2021/2022

Excellence in research underpins all of Royal Holloway's activities and aspirations. We aspire to produce world-leading research that substantially advances the knowledge base, and that fosters transformational impacts for individuals, society, and the environment. We also aspire to give our students an education that is informed by the highest standards of research and scholarship.

Royal Holloway is committed to upholding the principles of the Concordat to Support Research Integrity (Universities UK, October 2019)

1. upholding the highest standards of rigour and integrity in all aspects of research
2. ensuring that research is conducted according to appropriate ethical, legal and professional frameworks, obligations and standards
3. supporting a research environment that is underpinned by a culture of integrity and based on good governance, best practice, and support for the development of researchers
4. using transparent, timely, robust and fair processes to deal with allegations of research misconduct should they arise
5. working together to strengthen the integrity of research and to review progress regularly and openly

Research Ethics Project

Following recommendations from the task and finish group we began the three year research ethics project. This project will facilitate recommendations from the Task and Finish group report, a summary of which can be found below:

- A singular cross-College approach to research ethics (which covers projects from UG to staff)
- Implement a risk based approach for Institutional ethical review.
- That the practice of self-certification be removed
- Agreed that a new system was required to facilitate the necessary changes

To support implementation, we need to:

- Provide training needed for researchers of all levels.
- Invest in School-based R&I Ethics Officers
- Increase Ethics governance/support in Departments= each department to nominate at least one Academic to represent the discipline in research ethics matters.
- Standardise internal processes- research projects as part of routine teaching are reviewed by supervisors to address research ethics issues

The first phase of the project will:

- Roll out of the new risk framework for review

One of the outcomes of the task and finish group is the risk review framework. The Task & Finish group acknowledged that it is impossible to anticipate all the risks associated with research. Nonetheless, the group identified the potential of a risk-based review framework to:

    I.   help to characterise the level of risk of research projects.

    II.   implement more proportionate, efficient and timely review processes; and

    III.   supplement research ethics application audit data with the category of risk

- Data collection and review

We will collect data on research projects submitted to the online system to build a picture of the research submitted by risk level. This will provide evidence to support future investment and to identify where mitigation protocols are necessary

- Development of new system

We will explore in house options to address efficiency, oversight and most importantly the end user experience.

Promotion of research integrity

Research integrity at Royal Holloway is promoted through intranet pages (accessible externally), and through the provision and delivery of research ethics training. Royal Holloway subscribes to an online research ethics training programme provided by Epigeum, and professional services staff from the Department of Research & Innovation (primarily the Research Ethics and Integrity Manager), provide training via:

1. Termly research ethics sessions for postgraduate research students
2. An annual research ethic session for probationary staff
3. An annual research ethic session for all staff
4. Ad-hoc meetings with School PGR leads to promote research ethics and address any common issues

Reporting Misconduct

The [Research Misconduct Policy](#) has been fully approved, which outlines the process for reporting concerns about misconduct in research.

Misconduct Allegations

We investigated one allegations of potential research misconduct in 2021/22.

The senior member of staff responsible for overseeing research integrity is the Senior Vice-Principal (Academic Strategy and Research), Professor Ken Badcock ken.badcock@rhul.ac.uk

Policies, regulations, and guidance

Relating to Research Integrity include:

- Research Misconduct Policy
- Statement on Research Performance Expectations
- Code of Good Research Practice
- Data Protection Policy
- Research Ethics Policy
- Anti-Bribery Policy
- Code of Practice for Inquiry into Allegations of Misconduct in Relation to Academic Research and Scientific Activity
- Tobacco industry funding
- Whistleblowing Policy and Procedure
- Anti-Money Laundering Policy
- Criminal Finances Act Policy
- Conflict of Interest Policy
- Counter-Fraud Policy and Procedures