

Template: annual statement on research integrity

If you have any questions about this template, please contact:
RIsecretariat@universitiesuk.ac.uk.

Section 1: Key contact information

Question	Response
1A. Name of organisation	CRUK Scotland Institute (previously CRUK Beatson Institute)
1B. Type of organisation: higher education institution/industry/independent research performing organisation/other (please state)	Independent research performing organisation
1C. Date statement approved by governing body (DD/MM/YY)	Statement covering period 1 January 2025 to 31 December 2025 Approved by the CRUK Scotland Institute's Board of Directors on 02/03/2026
1D. Web address of organisation's research integrity page (if applicable)	https://www.crukscotlandinstitute.ac.uk/about/research-integrity.html
1E. Named senior member of staff to oversee research integrity	Name: Dr Catherine Winchester Head of the Research Integrity Service
	Email address: c.winchester@crukscotlandinstitute.ac.uk
1F. Named member of staff who will act as a first point of contact for anyone wanting	Name: Dr Catherine Winchester Head of the Research Integrity Service
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more information on matters of research integrity

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

Description of actions and activities undertaken

2A. Description of current systems and culture

We advocate the core values of research integrity (honesty, ethics, rigour, openness, transparency, accountability and care & respect) throughout the entire research lifecycle, from experimental design through data generation, analysis, management and preservation, to the sharing, dissemination and publication of research outputs. Research integrity is fundamental to all aspects of our research and as such, all activities are overseen by the Head of the Research Integrity Service and endorsed by the Institute's Director and Senior Management Team. We provide a positive workplace culture, where our research community is enabled to realise their full potential. This is championed by the People & Culture Team.

- **Policies**

Research integrity at the CRUK Scotland Institute is underpinned by the following policies relating to responsible research practices and a culture that is collaborative, inclusive and diverse:

- Code of Good Practice in Research
- Data Preservation
- Data Protection
- Ethics
- Publishing
- Open Access Publishing
- Authorship and Acknowledging Contributions

- Intellectual Property and Technology Transfer

- Press and Social Media

- Financial Conflict of Interest (for US funding)

- Misconduct in Research

- Statement on Dealing with Allegations of Research Misconduct Under United States Public Health Service (USPHS) Research-related Activities for Foreign Institutions

- Statement on assessing Questionable Research Practices & mistakes

- Whistleblowing

In addition, we have policies that encompass generating a positive research culture: Code of Professional Conduct, Career Development, Equal Opportunities, Bullying and Harassment, Sexual Harassment, Discipline and Grievance, Maternity Leave and Pay, Paternity Leave and Pay, Neonatal, Shared Parental Leave and Pay, Adoption Leave and Pay, Menopause, Team Retreat, Special Leave, Absence, Flexible Working, Hybrid Working, Travel, Entertainment, Immigration and Visa and Long Service.

- **Systems**

We have systems in place to ensure our research is conducted and disseminated in a responsible manner.

Researchers at the CRUK Scotland Institute are supported, advised and protected, by the Head of the Research Integrity Service, who oversees the mandatory research integrity training programme and raises awareness of best practice; supports data stewardship; develops and implements research policies and guidelines; conducts pre-submission manuscript reviews; supports and assesses post-publication data queries; coordinates the research integrity champions; engages with the sector to share and identify best practice; and is the internal and external point of contact for matters relating to research conduct and breaches of research integrity.

To facilitate best practice in reporting and publishing, we have guidelines for preparing manuscripts and hold monthly advice drop-in sessions, which are used in conjunction with our publishing checklist and publishing standards questionnaire (available from our inhouse research integrity toolkit). To promote transparency and reproducibility in our papers, we encourage the publication of protocols, appropriate and responsible data presentation, such as the use of [SuperPlots](#)¹, and

clear and precise descriptions of data and metadata, in compliance with [FAIR](#)² standards. All our manuscripts are reviewed by the Head of the Research Integrity Service prior to journal submission or posting on pre-print servers and checked for text plagiarism using [iThenticate](#)³ and for image anomalies using [Imagetwin](#)⁴. The CRUK Scotland Institute is fully committed to open access publishing and as such our papers are published under the CC BY 4.0 Attribution 4.0 International licence and are archived at Europe PubMed Central to maximise readership and use. We encourage researchers to use the [CRediT](#)⁵ taxonomy to define authors' precise contributions and ensure appropriate credit is given and that authors are accountable for their data, as well as acknowledging other contributions to published work. We have a mandatory process for archiving data associated with all publications, we deposit large data sets in repositories and have a system to track these data. We also promote the sharing of all other data.

We have over 40 [research integrity champions](#)⁶, embedded within each research group and each core facility team. This voluntary role, mainly undertaken by early career researchers, enables grassroots activity in promoting and supporting research integrity. The champions play an invaluable part in disseminating information, implementing research policies and supporting the stewardship of published data in their groups, as well as engaging in projects with the Head of the Research Integrity Service and attending a yearly meeting of the research integrity champions.

- **Training**

Research integrity training is mandatory for all researchers at the CRUK Scotland Institute, from PhD students to group leaders, and forms part of the induction process for all new researchers and technicians. Attendance is monitored and recorded by the Head of the Research Integrity Service.

Training is delivered as face-to-face workshops and seminars by the Head of the Research Integrity Service and scientists with relevant research experience. The training programme includes an induction to establish good research practices and sessions on integrity in scientific communication & writing, integrity in managing research data, responsible image processing and responsible use of statistics in experimental design and data analysis. As well as outlining our policies and expectations the programme raises awareness of reproducible and responsible research practices, encourages behaviour change and offers opportunities to discuss important issues and new initiatives underpinning research integrity, and provides an opportunity to reflect on good research practises within specific fields. It also serves to highlight support and guidance available at the CRUK Scotland Institute. Our training is bespoke and covers generic issues, but course content is specific to the local environment and the research being conducted.

The PhD students have additional annual research integrity workshops to provide opportunities for reflection and have discussions on research culture and research

integrity and a session on preparing theses with integrity.

Good research practice training continues informally within research groups and guidance on experimental design, data acquisition, processing and analysis is also captured in the training researchers receive from the CRUK Scotland Institute's Advanced Technology⁷ facility staff.

In addition, researchers undertake mandatory eLearning training to foster a positive research culture: Bullying and Harassment, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion, General Data Protection Regulation (UK), Unconscious Bias, and Cyber Security and Phishing.

The Senior Management Team and Group Leaders receive training in lab leadership⁸ and coaching in leadership⁹ and strategic thinking skills⁹ to support delivery of the Institute's vision.

- **Communications and engagement**

To identify and share best practices and to stay up to date with current developments we are members of several national research integrity organisations:

- Cancer Research UK's research integrity group
- Scottish Research Integrity Network (SRIN)
- UK Reproducibility Network (UKRN¹⁰)
- UK Research Integrity Office (UKRIO¹¹)

The Head of the Research Integrity Service disseminates information internally via email, interactions with the research integrity champions, content in the research integrity training programme and the inhouse research integrity toolkit.

- **Culture, development and leadership**

Developing a positive work culture at the CRUK Scotland Institute is led by the Head of People & Culture, who is responsible for delivering Human Resources, Learning and Organisational Development, EDI strategy, and Health and Wellbeing. This is underpinned by the work of the Head of the Research Integrity Service to enable researchers to operate in a collaborative and inclusive research environment that aims for all researchers to thrive and conduct responsible research. In addition, researchers are encouraged to join and participate in a variety of activities across the Institute, enabling everyone's voice to be heard: EDI Forum, Staff Forum, Postdoc Forum and Eco Committee. Regular 'townhall'

meetings are held to disseminate information. Researchers are supported by the wellbeing advice in the Employee Assistance Programme on the HR portal and trained mental health first aiders.

Researcher development is at the forefront of our research culture. As well as training researchers with technical, scientific and professional skills they are supported through mentoring (internal programme and external programmes, for example, CRUK's Women of Influence mentorship scheme), advisers and annual performance and personal development reviews. Key competencies, such as building relationships, collaboration, communication and presentation skills, curiosity and innovation, leadership and management capability and scientific outreach opportunities are provided to ensure we are taking a holistic approach to researcher development. Postdocs are encouraged to apply for funding and are supported by the Institute's Funding Co-ordinator to apply for grants and fellowships.

Effective leadership is an important aspect of our research culture and as such all new Group Leaders attend the [EMBO Laboratory Leadership](#)⁸ course. We also run [leadership](#)⁹ coaching and training programmes across the Institute to continue leadership development for more experienced research leaders.

We celebrate a range of events including Chinese New Year, Ramadan, Diwali and Christmas, promoting diversity and inclusion, and enriching our community with experiences and insights.

- **Monitoring and reporting**

The CRUK Scotland Institute has a [research integrity mailbox](#)¹² for raising concerns about potential breaches of research integrity and for reporting suspected research misconduct, which is listed on the Institute's [research integrity webpage](#)⁶ and on the intranet.

Queries relating to breaches of research integrity or allegations of research misconduct and investigations are recorded by the Head of the Research Integrity Service. In accordance with our Misconduct in Research Policy, the Head of the Research Integrity Service reports all concerns and allegations to the Institute Director. Preliminary misconduct investigations are reported to the Chair of the Board of Directors and all formal investigations are reported to CRUK and any other funder of the research/researcher concerned. Investigations involving researchers and data generated at external organisations are reported to the relevant funders and employers. Any problems identified in publications are reported directly to the journal concerned.

2B. Changes and developments during the period under review

- Policies, practices and procedures

In 2025 we revised our policies on Publishing, Open Access Publishing, Authorship and Acknowledging Contributions, Financial Conflict of Interest (for US funding) and Whistleblowing. These policies are now available on our [research integrity webpage](#)⁶.

Manuscript preparation advice drop-in sessions were introduced and held monthly.

Research integrity reviews were conducted on 37 primary research papers and quality control checks were conducted on 61 review / commentary / collaborative research articles by the Head of the Research Integrity Service prior to journal submission. All our first year PhD students' literature reviews and 9 final year PhD student theses were checked for text plagiarism using [iThenticate](#)³.

- Training

In 2025, the research integrity training programme was updated to align with the revised Concordat to support research integrity and a new module on "Incorporating good statistical practices into experimental design and data analysis" and refresher workshops for 2nd, 3rd and 4th year PhD students were introduced. These will be incorporated into the mandatory research integrity training programme from 2026 onwards. Overall, we held 10 research integrity induction workshops, 7 integrity in scientific writing & communication workshops, 7 integrity in managing research data workshops, 7 responsible digital image processing workshops, 1 lecture on Incorporating good statistical practices into experimental design and data analysis, and 3 refresher workshops. In addition, training was held on establishing good research practices for MSc students and for In2Research interns.

- Communications and engagement

In 2025, the Head of the Research Integrity Service participated in sector projects including UKRIO's [Authorship project](#)¹³ and [Authorship Integrity Toolkit](#)¹⁴ and UKRN's [Open & Responsible Researcher Reward & Recognition Project](#)¹⁵.

The Head of the Research Integrity Service gave an oral presentation at UKRN's [Symposium on checks for reproducibility](#)¹⁶ on "Checking manuscripts prior to journal submission to facilitate responsible publishing and reproducible research" and at the [International Research Culture Conference](#)¹⁷ (IRCC), on "destigmatising how we identify and address research mistakes".

The Head of the Research Integrity Service contributed to CRUK's cancer news blog

(Research with Integrity – Destigmatising the correction of scientific mistakes¹⁸) and UKRIO’s case study on research integrity champions, leads and advisers¹⁹.

- **Culture, development and leadership**

In 2025, the People & Culture team worked with representative staff and students from across the Institute to define our values (Innovate, Respect, Integrity, Teamwork and Excellence) and describe behaviours that embody these values.

Early career researchers, including technicians, clinical research PhD fellows and postdocs were encouraged and supported to make funding applications for fellowships, project grants and pilot grants to develop their research niches and were awarded £3.1M.

- **Monitoring and reporting**

In 2025, databases were generated to track archived published data and to track research integrity queries and assessments.

2C. Reflections on progress and plans for future developments

Our research integrity action plan was launched in 2025, and incorporated refinements to the content of our research integrity training programme, and identified generative AI guidance, statistical analysis support, Open Research practices, code integrity, and alignment of our policies with external organisations as areas for development.

2D. Case study on good practice

In 2024, the technical staff within the Beatson Advanced Imaging Resource (BAIR - RRID:SCR_023875) took over the Image Integrity training component of the Institute’s mandatory Research Integrity training programme. The BAIR team consists of 6 research technical professionals, all with experience of conducting their own independent research. They therefore view Image Integrity both from a facility staff and a researcher perspective, giving them a strong appreciation of its importance, as well as an understanding of how things can go wrong.

In 2025 they co-created a new image integrity training module delivering the training face to face in smaller groups of 10-15 people, promoting engagement and

participation from the learners in the form of interactive questions and Menti polls based on practical examples. The Image Integrity training module is aimed at everyone involved in collecting or publishing imaging data using techniques such as microscopy, western blotting and histology slide scanning, and is complementary to the Research Integrity training programme.

The Image Integrity training module covers the fundamental principles of imaging and its data, as well as correct storage, processing and analysis. It provides guidelines on preparing figures for publication and depositing them in appropriate repositories, following the FAIR data principles [doi: [10.1038/sdata.2016.18](https://doi.org/10.1038/sdata.2016.18)]. By discussing image integrity and potential issues in an open and frank manner they aim to instil honesty, transparency, rigour and accountability to everyone performing imaging and analysis.

During its first year, the BAIR team delivered 7 sessions, attended by 87 people.

Section 3: Addressing research misconduct

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

- Summary of processes for dealing with allegations of research misconduct

Our **Misconduct in Research** policy sets out our procedure for making an allegation of research misconduct and how we deal with any such allegation, including the investigation steps, timescale, team, reporting and recommendations. The named person for making allegations of research misconduct is the Head of the Research Integrity Service, Dr Catherine Winchester. In addition, we have a [research integrity mailbox](#)¹² that can be used by internal and external individuals to make allegations of research misconduct. Signposting on how to make an allegation of research misconduct is on the [CRUK Scotland Institute's website](#)⁶ and in the FAQs of the research integrity section of the intranet.

The Misconduct in Research Policy is under revision. Currently preliminary investigations are undertaken by two staff members who have no conflicts of interest in the case, are unbiased and have expertise to evaluate the appropriate research issues. The preliminary investigators conclude whether the investigation should end or proceed to a formal investigation, in a report submitted to the Director. At this time, a summary of the report is submitted to CRUK's Chief Executive Officer, Director of Research Funding, Communications and Partnerships, Head of Research Funding Operations and Senior Policy & Governance Manager. The formal investigation panel includes an external member, as well as appropriate members of staff, who may or may not have been involved with the preliminary investigation. Their report is submitted to the Director, Chair of the Board of Directors, CRUK's Chief Executive Officer, Director of Research Funding, Communications and Partnerships, Head of Research Funding Operations and Senior Policy & Governance Manager, and if appropriate other funding organisations.

Our **Whistleblowing** policy is under revision. The policy enables staff that have a reasonable and honest suspicion of malpractice or impropriety, including research misconduct, to raise such concerns. Any concerns raised are taken seriously and investigated responsibly, without fear of reprisal. The Institute has appointed an independent third party, NAVEX, to provide an external whistleblowing hotline service that is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Our **Bullying and Harassment** policy aims to create an environment that promotes

dignity and respect to all, and in which individual differences and the contributions of all our staff are recognised and valued. All complaints of harassment or bullying are dealt with promptly, either informally by addressing the harasser or seeking advice from HR or the complainant's Group Leader or following our formal procedure, whereby an investigation is undertaken using the CRUK Scotland Institute's Disciplinary and Grievances procedures. If necessary, counselling or training will be offered to the complainant and those accused of bullying or harassing behaviour. This policy aligns with CRUK's Policy on Dignity at Work in Research.

These policies will be publicly accessible on the [CRUK Scotland Institute's website](#)⁶ once they have been revised and approved by the Senior Management Team.

- **Summary of how the CRUK Scotland Institute creates and embeds an environment for reporting instances of research misconduct**

The CRUK Scotland Institute creates and embeds a research environment in which all staff and students feel comfortable to report instances of research misconduct through discussion during the research integrity training programme with the Head of the Research Integrity Service, signposting on our research integrity toolkit on the intranet and on our research integrity page on the [CRUK Scotland Institute's website](#)⁶ and our research policies. In line with the Concordat to Support Research Integrity, our research integrity induction emphasises researchers' responsibility to report research misconduct. In addition, the Head of the Research Integrity Service is available for staff and students to have confidential discussions, raise concerns or report research misconduct.

- **Lessons learned from investigations into allegations of research misconduct**

Assessing concerns relating to questionable research practices and potential breaches of research integrity is important for understanding the integrity of an organisation's research, ensuring responsible research practices and the dissemination of robust and reliable data. In our experience concerns are far more common than formal allegations of research misconduct and having a fair and unbiased structured process to objectively assess these has been invaluable for encouraging researchers to be open and transparent in self-reporting, and for the Head of the Research Integrity Service to identify potential problematic data or mistakes in papers and research practices. It is important that the assessment is unbiased and evidence-based by reviewing original data. Lessons learned have been incorporated into research integrity training programme, policy revisions and Institute processes.

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

Type of allegation	Number of allegations			
	Number of allegations reported to the organisation	Number of formal investigations	Number upheld in part after formal investigation	Number upheld in full after formal investigation
Fabrication	0	0	N/A	N/A
Falsification	0	0	N/A	N/A
Plagiarism	0	0	N/A	N/A
Failure to meet legal, ethical and professional obligations	0	0	N/A	N/A
Misrepresentation (eg data; involvement; interests; qualification; and/or publication history)	0	0	N/A	N/A
Improper dealing with allegations of misconduct	0	0	N/A	N/A
Multiple areas of concern (when received in a single allegation)	0	0	N/A	N/A
<i>Other*</i>	0	0	N/A	N/A
Total:	0	0	0	0

In 2025, there were no formal research misconduct investigations at the CRUK Scotland Institute. However, anonymous allegations of problematic data or research misconduct posted on PubPeer or raised by individuals and journals, were objectively reviewed by the Head of the Research Integrity Service in accordance with our Misconduct in Research Policy and research integrity assessment process. None of the initial assessments performed by the Head of the Research Integrity Service proceeded to a preliminary or a formal misconduct investigation.

Links

1. <https://rupress.org/jcb/article/219/6/e202001064/151717/SuperPlots-Communicating-reproducibility-and>
2. <https://www.go-fair.org/fair-principles/>
3. <https://www.ithenticate.com>
4. <https://imagetwin.ai>
5. <https://credit.niso.org>
6. <https://www.crukscotlandinstitute.ac.uk/about/research-integrity.html>
7. <https://www.crukscotlandinstitute.ac.uk/advanced-technologies.html>
8. <https://lab-management.embo.org/dates#group-leaders>
9. <https://www.capartnersconsulting.com>
10. <https://www.ukrn.org>
11. <https://ukrio.org>
12. researchintegrity@crukscotlandinstitute.ac.uk
13. <https://ukrio.org/research-integrity/our-current-activities/discussing-authorship-disputes/>
14. <https://ukrio.org/resources/the-authorship-integrity-toolkit/>
15. <https://www.ukrn.org/open-and-responsible-researcher-reward-and-recognition-or4/>
16. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bR03RIOBtoU>
17. <https://warwick.ac.uk/research/ncrc/ircc/>
18. <https://news.cancerresearchuk.org/2025/07/23/research-with-integrity-destigmatising-the-correction-of-scientific-mistakes/>

19. <https://ukrio.org/wp-content/uploads/Research-integrity-champions-case-study-from-CRUK-Scotland-Institute-V2-2025.pdf>researchintegrity@crukscotlandinstitute.ac.uk