Birkbeck, University of London Code of Practice on Research Integrity

1   Research at Birkbeck

1.1   Birkbeck, University of London is a research-intensive university. Central to our mission is the aim of maintaining and developing excellence in research and providing the highest quality research training in all our subject areas, and also of making available the results of research and the expertise acquired, through teaching, publication, partnerships with other organisations and the promotion of civic and public debate. It is embedded in the culture of Birkbeck that we should carry out excellent research across the entire range of disciplines represented in the College's Schools; that this research should range across 'blue skies' scientific work, cutting edge scholarship in the arts, humanities and social sciences, and highly applicable interventions in technology, social policy and artistic work; and that we seek to offer research-led and research-informed teaching at all levels.

1.2   The College has developed a *Research Strategy* to articulate the way we wish to set about achieving our aims and define the principles that characterise Birkbeck's research.

1.3   This Code of Practice aims to complement the *Research Strategy* by defining and promoting a culture of good practice in research, demonstrating the College's commitment to a culture and environment where high standards of personal and professional conduct are encouraged and expected.

1.4   Birkbeck expects all members of the College, including staff, undergraduate and postgraduate students and anyone conducting research on College premises or using College facilities, to observe the highest standards of professionalism, independent thought and application of ethical principles in the conduct of their research. This document provides guidelines on the issues involved in the proper conduct of research and on the standards expected and applies to all research and research-related projects (such as consultancy and knowledge exchange) regardless of the source of funding. While detailed aspects of the guidelines are more applicable to some subject areas or groups of people than others, the principles of good research practice are relevant to all subject areas.

1.5   In this document, the term "Research" refers to all aspects of the research process including developing research questions, preparing applications for research grants and contracts, literature review, research project design, recruiting research participants, undertaking experiments, generating data, data recording and analysis, writing-up and publishing and other forms of disseminating results.

1.6   Anyone wanting more information on matters of research integrity should contact the Chair of the College Ethics Committee or the Pro Vice Chancellor Research in the first instance

2   Principles of research integrity

2.1   We are committed to upholding the highest standards of rigour and integrity in all aspects of research.

The core elements are:

- honesty in all aspects of research, including in the presentation of research goals, intentions and findings; in reporting on research methods and procedures; in gathering data; in using and acknowledging the work of other researchers; and in conveying valid interpretations and making justifiable claims based on research findings
- rigour, in line with prevailing disciplinary norms and standards, and in performing research and using appropriate methods; in adhering to an agreed protocol where appropriate; in drawing interpretations and conclusions from the research; and in communicating the results
- transparency and open communication in declaring potential competing interests; in the reporting of research data collection methods; in the analysis and interpretation of data; in making research findings widely available, which includes publishing or otherwise sharing negative or null results to recognise their value as part of the research process; and in presenting the work to other researchers and to the public
- care and respect for all participants in research, and for the subjects, users and beneficiaries of research, including humans, animals, the environment and cultural objects. Those engaged with research must also show care and respect for the integrity of the research record
- accountability of funders, employers and researchers to collectively create a research environment in which individuals and organisations are empowered and enabled to own the research process. Those engaged with research must also ensure that individuals and organisations are held to account when behaviour falls short of the standards expected

2.2   To foster and maintain its research culture, Birkbeck expects all researchers to understand the expected standards of rigour and integrity relevant to their research and to maintain the highest standards of rigour and integrity in their work at all times. Researchers are also expected to understand and observe these principles:

- Maintaining open and honest professional standards
- Encouraging and Facilitating equality, diversity and inclusion
- Exercising accountability in research
- Ensuring leadership and cooperation in research groupings
- Taking special account of the needs of inexperienced researchers, and ensuring they have sufficient training in supervision and management
- Ensuring training and supervision for researchers
- Planning and conducting research in accordance with the requirements of funders and all relevant College and external codes of practice, legislation and regulatory bodies
- Following best current ethical practice

- Exercising care and respect for participants in research projects
- Ensuring data is stored, shared, preserved and disposed of in an appropriate and responsible manner
- Documenting and making available research data
- Ensuring the results of research are openly accessible
- Acknowledging the contribution of others
- Taking appropriate measures to protect intellectual property
- Taking action if research misconduct is suspected
- Managing any conflicts of interest in line with the College policy

2.3   The College recognises its duty to:

- maintain a research environment that develops good research practice and embeds a culture of research integrity
- provide and proactively maintain a positive workplace culture
- to provide promote and support research integrity through training and through activities such as support for peer review
- support researchers to understand and act according to expected standards, values and behaviours
- defend researchers when they live up to these expectations in difficult circumstances
- have procedures in place to ensure that research is conducted in accordance with standards of best practice; systems to promote research integrity; and transparent, robust and fair processes to investigate alleged research misconduct
- to have clear and simple processes for anyone seeking support in relation to bullying , harassment and inappropriate behaviour, including online behaviours
- be aware when research is being conducted collaboratively, and particularly within interdisciplinary or international partnerships, that there needs to be clear agreement on, and articulation of, the standards and frameworks that will apply to the work. The College will use acknowledged external standards, for example the Global Code Of Conduct for Research in Resource-Poor Settings or the UNESCO Recommendation on Science and Scientific Researchers to provide advice on this point.

3   Open and honest professional standards

3.1   Researchers are responsible for exercising honesty in respect of their own actions in research and in their responses to the actions of other researchers. This applies to all aspects of the research process. While recognising that researchers will want to protect their own research interests in the process of planning research and obtaining results, the College encourages researchers to be as open as possible in discussing their work.

3.2   The College believes that in order to function as a suitable environment for research with integrity, our researchers should be able to undertake their research in a way which is free from harassment and bullying and where there is an expectation that people maintain a health work life balance.

4 Leadership and organisation

4.1 It is the responsibility of the College's senior academic staff, especially the Vice Chancellor, Deputy Vice Chancellor, Pro Vice Chancellor (Research) and Executive Deans, to ensure that a climate is created which allows research to be conducted with integrity, to excellent standards and in accordance with best practice.

4.2 Within Faculties, the Faculty Head of Research, Innovation and Knowledge, the Heads of School, Directors of Research Centres and leaders of research groups are expected to promote a research environment of mutual cooperation, in which all members of a research team are encouraged to develop their skills and in which the open exchange of ideas is fostered. Leaders of research groups (or where there is not a research group leader the Head of School) will ensure that appropriate direction of research and supervision of researchers is provided, which in the case of students undertaking research should comply with College and national codes of practice and in the case of research staff should be in accordance with the *Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers*. Responsibilities should be clearly allocated and understood.

5 Accountability in research

5.1 Where research is externally funded, researchers, especially Principal Investigators, must ensure that the research that they are undertaking is consistent with the terms and conditions agreed with the funder of the research. This includes, but is not restricted to, ensuring that the research programme carried out is as defined in the original proposal to the funder (or as defined in amendments agreed with the funder); that the funds are used solely for the research purpose as agreed with the funder; that reports are accurate and delivered on time; and that conditions relating to publication and ownership of Intellectual Property are adhered to.

5.2 Researchers must comply with ethical, legal and professional frameworks, obligations and standards as required by statutory and regulatory authorities, and by employers, funders and other relevant stakeholders, and ensure that all their research is subject to active and appropriate consideration of ethical issues.

5.3 **Researchers** will:
- take responsibility for keeping their knowledge up to date on the frameworks, standards and obligations that apply to their work
- collaborate to maintain a research environment that encourages research integrity
- design, conduct and report research in ways that embed integrity and ethical practice throughout

6 Inexperienced researchers

6.1 Researchers who are new to the academic community will need support as they gain experience. Responsibility for ensuring that new researchers understand good research practice lies with all members of the community, but particularly with leaders of research groups and Heads of Schools/Faculty Heads of Research, Innovation and Knowledge Exchange where there are no group leaders. Good practice includes the induction of researchers to their new environment and the relevant procedures and guidelines for the Faculty and the College and the formal provision of research integrity training

7 Training and Supervision

7.1 All researchers should receive good supervision appropriate to their experience at all relevant stages of the research process. Leaders of research groups, or Heads of Schools/Faculty Heads of Research, Innovation and Knowledge Exchange where there are no group leaders, are responsible for ensuring that all new researchers undertake appropriate training in accordance with their specific requirements. Supervision for research students will follow the provisions of the College's *Code of Practice for Postgraduate Research Students*. The College will provide training for researchers and supervisors.

7.2 The College expects that all its researchers, from PhD to Professor, regularly have the opportunity to refresh their knowledge in research integrity related matters and, in addition to training provided centrally, expects all Faculties and Schools to provide tailored local provision.

8 Planning and Conducting Research

8.1 When designing research projects, researchers should take all reasonable measures to ensure accuracy of information and compliance with the procedures.

8.2 Purchasing and expenditure of funds should be in accordance with the terms and conditions of any grant or contract held for the research and the College's *Financial Regulations* and associated guidance. Guidance on compliance with the financial regulations in the conduct of research is available from the Research Office.

8.3 Researchers must develop ethical protocols for conducting the research that are in accordance with the College's *Procedures and Responsibilities for Ethical Review* (please also see section 9).

8.4 Researchers must be honest about conflict of interest issues, whether actual, potential or perceived, at the earliest opportunity and at all stages of research, e.g. when designing projects, applying for funding, identifying collaborators and reporting results.

Research Students or visiting researchers who are not employees of the College

should normally report any concerns to their supervisor in the first instance (or seek independent advice as described in paragraph 9 of the Research Misconduct Procedures).

Conflicts of interest should be managed in line with the College's Code of Conduct for Managing Conflicts of Interest.

8.5   There should be a Data Management Plan, clearly setting out arrangements for the management, security, storage and disposal of research data, in compliance with the requirements of the Data Protection Act and the *College Open Research policy*, in place and understood and implemented by all researchers involved in the project.

8.6   Advice on personal data should be sought as appropriate from the Head of Data Protection

8.7   All researchers must conduct and necessary risk assessments (and related assessments such as COSHH) which are required under the Health and Safety at Work Act.

8.8   Advice on Health and Safety should be sought as appropriate from the Department Safety Co-ordinators and the College Health and Safety Officer

8.9   All research must be carried out in a manner which complies with:
- The Concordat to Support Research Integrity
- The Concordat on Open Research Data

In addition, all research that includes the appointment of researchers must be carried out in a manner that also complies with:
- The College's Equal Opportunities and Diversity policy
- The Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers
- The Health and Safety at Work Act (1974) and the Safety Regulations approved under this Act
- The College's Health and Safety policies and regulations
- The College's employment policies

8.10   All researchers involved in the project should be made aware of this Code and the policies and procedures.

8.11   In collaborative projects, researchers should try to anticipate any issues which may arise (e.g. around research design, authorship and publishing, the ownership of IP, and who is responsible for resolving questions about research integrity/misconduct). These issues should be discussed and agreed before the project commences and this should be held under review for the duration of the project (in recognition that things may change over the course of the project). Normally, for inter-HEI collaborations, the collaboration agreement should specify which institutions policies take precedence in the event that the policies conflict.

9   Ethical practice

9.1   Ethical research not only protects researchers, research participants and the College against potential harm that could arise during the research process, but it also seeks to make a positive contribution to the interests and well-being of participants, researchers and society as a whole. This can be through many routes, such as actively addressing suffering and hardship, opening out neglected areas of oppression, identifying talents and opportunities for personal growth or social development, or simply expanding the boundaries of knowledge. Birkbeck is fully committed to encouraging ethical research in this broad sense and to ensuring that its research community has ethical practice as a cornerstone of its activities.

9.2   The College recognises its duty to:

- have clear policies on ethical review and approval that are available to all researchers
- make sure that all researchers are aware of, and understand policies and processes relating to ethical approval
- support researchers to adopt best practice in relation to ethical, legal and professional requirements
- have appropriate arrangements in place through which researchers can access advice and guidance on ethical, legal and professional obligations and standards

9.3   The College's policy on *Responsibilities and Procedures for Ethical Review* apply to

- all researchers in the College (staff, undergraduate and postgraduate students) who are conducting or contributing to research activities;
- all individuals who are not members of the College (including visiting academics and visiting Professors) but who are conducting or contributing to research activities which take place within the College or using college facilities;
- all investigations which may have ethical dimensions and put participants or the College at risk.

9.4   Researchers are responsible for establishing whether ethical approval is likely to be needed for a research project, in accordance with the *Procedures and Responsibilities for Ethical Review*. Researchers should seek advice from their School Ethics Lead in the first instance.

9.5   Research projects must not be carried out unless and until all the necessary approvals, notifications and licences are in place. The leader of the research group should ensure that the appropriate approvals are identified, obtained and documented prior to the start of the research.

9.6   The standards and requirements set out in guidelines published by funding bodies, learned societies and other relevant professional bodies must also be observed by researchers within each relevant subject discipline.

10   Research results

10.1   It is important that research ideas can be challenged and tested once published. Researchers should always be prepared to question and critique the outcome of their research. Researchers will check all research results before being made public.

10.2   It is important that researchers or research groups should not become subject to pressures that conflict with the normal processes of research inquiry, for example constraints imposed by the source of funding of the research. Researchers should resist any pressure to produce results that suit the specific interests of a funder. This is particularly the case where researchers could be perceived to have a conflict of interest through involvement with the funder. Any such conflict of interest, whether actual, potential or perceived, should be disclosed at the earliest opportunity to the Head of School for the subject area or to the PVC (Research) or the Chair of College Ethics Committee and (in all cases) to the Deputy Director of Research (Operations). All sensitive research should be subject to ethical review as described in Colleges 'Responsibilities and Procedures for Ethical Review' document.

11   Documenting Results

11.1   Throughout their work, researchers should keep clear and accurate records of the procedures followed, of the sources of research material and of the results obtained, including interim results. This is necessary not only as a means of demonstrating proper research practice, but also in case questions are subsequently asked about the conduct of the research, the results obtained or ownership of the data or results. Proper documenting and storage procedures will minimise cases of allegations of research misconduct where original data cannot be located or replicated.

11.2   Researchers are responsible for complying with the Data Protection Act ensuring that copyright, any third party's intellectual property rights and confidentiality are not breached. The Data Protection Act applies to research that involves personal data collected about living individuals and requires that such data should not be used for purposes other than those for which it was collected. Researchers should understand and observe the College *Data Protection Policy*.

11.3   In cases where recordings or transcripts of interviews or group discussions are the basis for research, these should be kept confidential and should follow the procedures agreed when ethical approval was given for the research. In clinical studies, consent forms and raw data should be kept securely. In social sciences and humanities research, sources (such as published works, archives or collections) should be accurately recorded and any transcription or data archive rules recorded at the start of the project to ensure consistency. Maintenance of laboratory notebooks and other data sources can also help to ensure that intellectual property can be protected. In all cases, research data should be managed in line with the Data Management Plan prepared as part of the research grant application, or at the beginning of the research project.

12 Management of Data

12.1   Primary data which is the basis for publications should be securely stored for an appropriate time in a durable form, in accordance with the Data Management Plan, funder requirements, undertakings given to participants and the College *Data Protection Policy* and *Open Research Policy*. The principles of the Concordat on Open Research Data should also be followed.

12.2   The means of data storage (including paper, electronic media, electronic data archive) should be appropriate to the task, and for studies requiring ethical approval must be consistent with the methods agreed when ethical approval was given for the research. Provision should be made for the automatic back-up of data or software stored on a computer and special attention should be paid to guaranteeing the security of electronic data. Advice should be sought from the Research Data Support Manager.

12.3   Where research is externally funded, any requirements of the funder for keeping data must be complied with. Timescales and mode of data storage for each project should be confirmed at the outset of the research programme in the Data Management Plan. The presumption should be that research data (as opposed to personal data) is stored indefinitely and made available under FAIR (findable, accessible, interoperable and reusable) principles. The Research Data Support Manager can give advice about this.

12.4   Disposal of data and samples should be carried out in accordance with the appropriate internal or external procedures according to the nature of the research data and any Faculty or College Ethics Committee requirements and must be consistent with undertakings given to participants.

12.5   Researchers must also take into account legislation and funder policies affecting the storage and release of data, for example:

- The Freedom of Information (FOI) Act, through which individuals have the right to request any information that is held by the College. The College as a publicly funded body is obliged to comply with the Act, and all staff have the responsibility to make themselves aware of their obligations under the Act
- The Environmental Information Regulations (EIR) through which individuals have the right to request any environmental information (information about state of the environment and factors, measures and activities that affect it) that is held by the College. The College is obliged to comply with the Regulations, and all staff have the responsibility to make themselves aware of their obligations under the Act
- The Data Protection Act (DPA) places responsibilities and obligations on the College in the way that it processes information about living individuals. The Act gives individuals certain rights and also specifies that those who record and use personal data must be open about how that information is used and must follow specific data protection principles when processing that information
- The Concordat on Open Research Data which describes our responsibilities to make our data available to other researchers and to support the integrity of the research base.

13   Documenting and making available research data

13.1   Birkbeck recognises the importance of the principle of public accessibility of research data to the integrity of the research process, and the value of research data as a resource both to the originating researcher(s) and to subsequent researchers for data re-use and meta-analysis.

13.2   Birkbeck further recognises that publicly-funded research data are a public good, produced in the public interest, and should be made openly available with as few restrictions as possible in a timely and responsible manner that does not impinge upon the intellectual property of the originating researcher(s).

13.3   Researchers should lodge relevant data and arrange for it to be made accessible under the provisions of the College *Open Research Policy*.

14   Publishing Results

14.1   The issue of authorship is important in the context of good research practice and must be taken seriously. The College expects anyone listed as an author on a paper to accept personal responsibility for their ownership of the contents of the paper.

14.2   Authorship conventions vary across disciplines; however, the College expects a fair recognition of contribution in line with disciplinary norms. Any person who participates in a substantial way to the relevant research should be given the opportunity to be included as an author of any publication derived from that research. Only those who have participated in the research should be listed as authors. The contributions of formal collaborators and all others who directly assist or indirectly support the research should also be properly acknowledged. This applies to any circumstances in which statements about the research are made, including provision of information about the nature and process of the research, and in publishing the outcome. Where appropriate, the funders of the research and other collaborating bodies should be acknowledged.

14.2   If an error is found that impacts on the value of the published results, the researcher should discuss the matter with the other researchers in the project and publish a correction as soon as possible. Where the findings are found to be in serious doubt, a retraction should be published promptly.

14.3   Research should be published and disseminated when appropriate and wherever possible. Researchers are responsible for meeting the requirements of the College's *Open Research Policy*.

15   Peer Review

15.1   Peer review makes a vital contribution to scholarship, and the College encourages all researchers to consider acting as peer reviewers as appropriate for their

discipline. The College recognises the need for researchers who are acting as peer reviewers to be thorough and objective, and to maintain the confidentiality of the process.

15.2   The College expects that any researchers who choose to act as peer reviewers to discharge these duties with the highest standards of thoroughness and thoughtfulness, and that these researchers will not retain or copy the material they have been asked to review nor use a research design or research findings from material they have been asked to review, other than: as necessary for the purposes of the review; in line with the guidance of the body who has asked for the review; or with the express permission of the original author.

15.3   The College expects all researchers to declare any relevant conflicts of interest in peer review by the mechanism appropriate to the review in question, under the terms defined by the body requesting the review.

15.4   If a researcher from the College suspects research misconduct in the material they have been asked to review then they should follow the research misconduct policy defined by the body requesting the review.

16   Public Engagement, Knowledge Exchange, Impact and Intellectual Property

16.1   The College recognises and is supportive of the strategic need to engage the public and society with our research, and is supportive of the principles defined in the Concordat to Engage the Public with Research.

16.2   The College recognises that research should be disseminated for the maximum benefit of society at large and expects all researchers to consider how to engage the public with the research and the potential impacts which may arise from their research projects as a standard part of the research development process, whether or not this is an explicit requirement from a funder.

16.3   The College believes that the public interest is directly served where access to a piece of research would further the public's understanding of, and/or participation in:

- the debates of the day;
- facilitate accountability and transparency in research;
- allow individuals to understand how research affects their lives and support them to make informed decisions;
- and where information is brought to light which affects public wellbeing and safety.

16.4   The College notes that considerations about whether or not withholding information is in the public interest include considerations of national defence, maintaining good international relations, and law enforcement considerations. Commercial interests may also need to be considered. The policies and procedures for ethical review set out how an individual researcher should consider these

questions and the process for obtaining approval in each of these cases.

16.5 Researchers must ensure that any research project design or any research contracts or agreements that they enter into include provisions for the ownership and management of resulting intellectual property (IP). IP includes (but is not limited to): innovations in research design; research data and findings; processes; hardware and software; apparatus and equipment; substances and materials; and artistic and literary works including academic and scientific publications.

16.6 Under normal circumstances, the College would be the body seeking to protect the IP generated by research projects undertaken by our researchers. However, there are instances where this does not apply. Examples include research projects undertaken by students (where the IP automatically belongs to the student unless they have chosen to assign it to the College), and collaborative projects (where IP arrangements will be agreed between all parties as part of the collaboration agreement).

16.7 It is the responsibility of the lead researcher from the College to anticipate any possible issues relating to IP at the earliest possible opportunity and to agree in advance how they might be addressed, and then to communicate this information to the wider research team.

16.8 Researchers must not disclose any research or research findings if this will invalidate commercial property rights and should seek advice where this may be an issue. The College recognises the need to minimise any delay in publication pending the formal protection of IP and the vital role that timely publication plays in maintaining the intellectual infrastructure of disciplines and will work with individual researchers to find the appropriate balance between these two competing demands as and when this situation arises. The presumption of the College is that IP developed from public or charitable funds should be disseminated widely for the maximum possible public benefit.

16.9 The College expects researchers to note and comply with any additional conditions relating to IP that may be defined by the funder of the research. In the event that the funders terms and conditions appear to conflict with this policy, the researcher should take advice from the relevant parties within the College (e.g. the Innovation Support Unit).

16.10 Further advice about intellectual property can be found on the Research Office pages of the College website.

16.11 The College recognises that considerations of intellectual property rights, commercial confidentiality and security, whilst important, should not prevent the Colleges research community from meeting their responsibilities with respect to the communication of research results.

17 Research misconduct

17.1 According to the Concordat to Support Research Integrity (2019), Commitment 4, pages 12-13: Research misconduct 'is characterised as behaviours or actions that fall short of the standards of ethics, research and scholarship required to ensure that the integrity of research is upheld. It can cause harm to people and the environment, wastes resources, undermines the research record and damages the credibility of research.

17.2 The Concordat recognises that academic freedom is fundamental to the production of excellent research. This means that responsibility for ensuring that no misconduct occurs rests primarily with individual researchers'. Research misconduct can take many forms, including but not limited to:

- **fabrication**: making up results, other outputs (for example, artefacts) or aspects of research, including documentation and participant consent, and presenting and/or recording them as if they were real
- **falsification**: inappropriately manipulating and/or selecting research processes, materials, equipment, data, imagery and/or consents
- **plagiarism**: using other people's ideas, intellectual property or work (written or otherwise) without acknowledgement or permission
- **failure to meet: legal, ethical and professional obligations**, for example:
  - not observing legal, ethical and other requirements for human research participants, animal subjects, or human organs or tissue used in research, or for the protection of the environment
  - breach of duty of care for humans involved in research whether deliberately, recklessly or by gross negligence, including failure to obtain appropriate informed consent
  - misuse of personal data, including inappropriate disclosures of the identity of research participants and other breaches of confidentiality
  - improper conduct in peer review of research proposals, results or manuscripts submitted for publication. This includes failure to disclose conflicts of interest; inadequate disclosure of clearly limited competence; misappropriation of the content of material; and breach of confidentiality or abuse of material provided in confidence for the purposes of peer review
- **misrepresentation of**:
  - data, including suppression of relevant results/data or knowingly, recklessly or by gross negligence presenting a flawed interpretation of data
  - involvement, including inappropriate claims to authorship or attribution of work and denial of authorship/attribution to persons who have made an appropriate contribution
  - interests, including failure to declare competing interests of researchers or funders of a study
  - qualifications, experience and/or credentials
  - publication history, through undisclosed duplication of publication, including undisclosed duplicate submission of manuscripts for publication
- **improper dealing with allegations of misconduct**:

- failing to address possible infringements, such as attempts to cover up misconduct and reprisals against whistle-blowers
- failing to adhere appropriately to agreed procedures in the investigation of alleged research misconduct accepted as a condition of funding
- improper dealing with allegations of misconduct includes the inappropriate censoring of parties through the use of legal instruments, such as non-disclosure agreements.

For the avoidance of doubt, misconduct in research includes acts of omission as well as acts of commission.

17.3   The College will take seriously any allegation of research misconduct. At the same time the College is committed to protecting its staff from vexatious or malicious accusations.

17.4   Honest errors and differences in, for example, research methodology or interpretations do not constitute research misconduct.'

17.5   In addition, the standards by which allegations of misconduct in research should be judged should be those prevailing in the country in which the research took place and at the date that the behaviour under investigation took place (the requirements on the processing and storage of personal and research data). This is particularly important (and not straightforward) when investigating allegations relating to research that was carried out many years previously.

17.6   The basis for reaching a conclusion that an individual is responsible for misconduct in research relies on a judgement that there was an intention to commit the misconduct and/or recklessness in the conduct of any aspect of a research project. Where allegations concern an intentional and/or reckless departure from accepted procedures in the conduct of research that may not fall directly within the terms detailed above, a judgement should be made as to whether the matter should be investigated using the Procedure.

17.7   The College will take seriously any allegation of research misconduct. Plagiarism, deception or the fabrication or falsification of results is regarded as a serious disciplinary offence. All researchers are expected to report cases of suspected misconduct or malpractice and to do so in a responsible and appropriate manner in accordance with the College's procedures.

17.8   **Researchers** will:

- act in good faith with regard to allegations of research misconduct, whether in making allegations or in being required to participate in an investigation, and take reasonable steps, working with employers as appropriate, to ensure the recommendations made by formal research misconduct investigation panels are implemented
- handle potential instances of research misconduct in an appropriate manner; this includes reporting misconduct to employers, funders and professional, statutory and regulatory bodies as circumstances require
- declare and act accordingly to manage conflicts of interest

18 Procedure for dealing with allegations of research misconduct

18.1 The Colleges procedure for dealing with allegations of research misconduct can be found on the Colleges Research Integrity web pages.

18.2 When the College receives an allegation of research misconduct it will:

- act with no detriment to whistle-blowers who have made allegations of misconduct in good faith, or in the public interest, including taking reasonable steps to safeguard their reputation. This includes avoiding the inappropriate use of legal instruments, such as non-disclosure agreements
- take reasonable steps to resolve any issues found during the investigation. This can include imposing sanctions, requesting a correction of the research record and reporting any action to regulatory and statutory bodies, research participants, funders or other professional bodies as circumstances, contractual obligations and statutory requirements dictate
- take reasonable steps to safeguard the reputation of individuals who are exonerated
- provide information on investigations of research misconduct to funders of research and to professional and/or statutory bodies as required by their conditions of grant and other legal, professional and statutory obligations
- support our researchers in providing appropriate information when they are required to make reports to professional and/or statutory bodies

18.3 Anonymised summary information about significant research misconduct issues is made available to relevant institutional bodies (CEC, Governors, HR, Research Committee etc.) and a statement about research integrity will be included in the annual research report which is produced for the Governors. This statement shall also be published on our website.

18.4 Annual reviews of research integrity will be provided to funders of research if they so require.

Agreed by College Ethics Committee March 2024
(next revision March 2026)