

UNIVERSITY CODE OF GOOD PRACTICE IN RESEARCH

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Preamble

The University of Reading Code of Good Practice in Research (the Code) is based upon the UK Research Integrity Office's Code of Practice for Research ([UKRIO Code](#)). Everyone at the University has a responsibility to ensure that research is undertaken in conformity with the law, in line with funders' contractual terms and conditions and in accordance with best current practice. To these ends, the University provides an environment where good research practice is encouraged throughout its research activities. This Code sets out the standards of performance and conduct expected of all those engaged in research in the University of Reading, and is applicable both to individual researchers and to the University as a whole.

1.5 Research definition

Note that, for the purposes of this Code, “research” refers to the definition used by the Research Assessment Exercise (Research Assessment Exercise 2008, p. 34):

- a) “‘Research’... is to be understood as original investigation undertaken in order to gain knowledge and understanding. It includes work of direct relevance to the needs of commerce, industry, and to the public and voluntary sectors; scholarship*; the invention and generation of ideas, images, performances, artefacts undertaken to the10.5 ()5.1 (n o)1.9 ()4.6 (y sub.1 (ndus)10.4 (m)8.8 (a(e)9 (nt)2.6 (m)8.8 (w)9.2 (w)9.2 (y (,)2 (i)5.1

2 PRINCIPLES

2.1 Preamble

All researchers at the University must adhere to the following principles, which set out the responsibilities and values relevant to research. While some elements may seem self-evident, and there is some overlap, these principles aim to encourage all involved in research to consider the wider consequences of their work and to engage critically with the practical, ethical and intellectual challenges that are inherent in the conduct of high quality research, rather than treating codes of practice such as this as just another procedure to be followed.

Researchers must be guided by these principles when implementing and complying with the core Standards (section 3) and the Recommended Checklist for Researchers (section 4).

2.2 Impact

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3.1.6 Appropriateness of research funders. The University reserves the right to withhold permission for its staff to engage in research contracts with certain funding bodies. In certain cases, permission may need to be obtained from the Vice Chancellor. Guidance is available from [Academic and Governance Services](#).

3.2 Leadership and supervision

3.2.1 The University promotes and maintains an environment which fosters and supports research of high ethical standards, mutual co-operation, professionalism and the open and honest exchange of ideas. University researchers must ensure that good conduct in research is promoted and inappropriate conduct is identified and addressed.

3.2.2 The University is committed to providing direction and supervision of research and researchers, setting out clear lines of accountability for the organisation and management of research. The University provides support for researchers in meeting the legal and ethical requirements of conducting research. It encourages the career development of its researchers and provides training and mentoring of new researchers. It provides training and support for Principal Investigators and Supervisors. The University actively supports the Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers and was one of the first 10 UK universities to receive the European Commission's 'HR Excellence in Research' badge.

3.2.3

- c) the design and conduct of the study, including how data will be gathered, analysed and managed, are set out in detail in a pre-specified research plan or protocol;
- d) all necessary skills and experience will be available to carry out the proposed research, in the proposed research team or through collaboration with specialists in relevant fields;
- e) sufficient resources will be available to carry out the proposed research and that these resources meet all relevant standards;
- f) any issues relating to the above are resolved as far as possible prior to the start of the research.

3.4.2 Researchers must conduct a risk assessment of the planned study to determine:

- a) whether there are any ethical issues and whether ethics review is required; University research ethics policies and procedures may be found [here](#)
- b) the potential for risks to the organisation, the research, or the health, safety and wellbeing of researchers and research participants. Health and Safety guidance is available [here](#); and
- c) the legal requirements that govern the research. In the first instance, guidance on such matters may be obtained from [Research and Enterprise](#).

3.4.3 Where the design of a study has been approved by ethics, regulatory or peer review, researchers must ensure that any subsequent alterations to the design are subject to appropriate review to determine that they will not compromise the integrity of the research or any terms of consent previously given.

3.4.4 The University has in place systems to ensure that when there are risks that proposed research or its results may be misused for purposes that are illegal or harmful, those risks are identified and addressed. University guidance on risk management and risk assessment may be found [here](#) and [here](#).

3.4.5 Researchers must try to anticipate any risks that the proposed research might produce results that could be misused for purposes that are illegal or harmful. Researchers must report any risks to, and seek guidance from, the appropriate person(s) in the University and take action to minimise those risks. In the first instance, researchers at the University must report anticipated risks to their School Director of Research.

3.4.6 Researchers must be prepared to make research designs available to peer reviewers and journal editors when submitting research reports for publication.

3.5 Collaborative working

3.5.1 Researchers must pay particular attention to projects which include participants from different countries or where work will be carried out in another country due to the additional legal and ethical requirements and other guidelines that may apply.

3.5.2 The University works with partner organisations to ensure the agreement of, and compliance with, common standards and procedures for the conduct of collaborative research, including the resolution of any issues or problems that might arise and the investigation of any allegations of misconduct in research if they occur.

3.5.3 Researchers must be aware of the standards and procedures for the conduct of research followed by any organisations involved in collaborative research that they are undertaking. They must also be aware of any contractual requirements involving partner organisations, seeking guidance and assistance where necessary and reporting any concerns or irregularities to an appropriate person(s) as soon as they become aware of them.

3.5.4 Researchers must try to anticipate any issues that might arise as a result of working collaboratively and agree jointly in advance how they might be addressed, communicating any decisions to all members of the research team.

3.7.3

replacement and refinement of involving animals in research projects and must refer to the relevant guidance from the [Home Office](#). University-

3.15 Collection and retention of data

3.15.1 University researchers must comply with all legal, ethical, funding body and organisational requirements for the collection, use and storage of data, especially personal data, where particular attention must be paid to the requirements of data protection legislation, guidance on which may be found [here](#).

Researchers must also maintain confidentiality where undertakings have been made to third parties or to protect intellectual property rights.

Researchers must ensure that research data relating to publications is available for discussion with other researchers, subject to any existing agreements on confidentiality, in accordance with the University's [Research](#)

3.16 Facilities and equipment

3.16.1

must inform, in confidence, an appropriate representative of the organisation which requested the review, such as the editor of the relevant journal or chair of the relevant grants or ethics committee.

3.19 Publication and authorship

3.19.1 The University recognises the duty to publish and disseminate research in a manner that reports the research and all the findings of the research accurately and without selection that could be misleading.

3.19.2 The University ensures that sponsors and funders of research: respect the duty of researchers to publish their research and the findings of their research; do not discourage or suppress appropriate publication or dissemination; and do not attempt to influence the presentation or interpretation of findings inappropriately.

3.19.3 The University provides training and support to guide researchers in the publication and dissemination of research and the findings of research that involves: confidential or proprietary information; issues relating to patents or intellectual property; findings with serious implications for public health; contractual or other legal obligations; and/or interest from the media or the general public.

3.19.4 Researchers must address issues relating to publication and authorship, especially the roles of all collaborators and contributors, at an early stage of the design of a project, recognising that, subject to legal and ethical requirements, roles and contributions may change during the time span of the research. Decisions on publication and authorship must be agreed jointly and communicated to all members of the research team.

3.19.5 Authorship must be restricted to those contributors and collaborators who have made a significant intellectual or practical contribution to the work. No person who fulfils the criteria for authorship may be excluded from the submitted work. Authorship must not be allocated to honorary or "guest" authors (i.e. those that do not fulfil criteria of authorship). Researchers must be aware that anyone listed as an author of any work must be prepared to take public responsibility for that work and ensure its accuracy, and be able to identify their contribution to it. Due regard, where relevant, should be paid to the order of authors.

3.19.6 Researchers must list the work of all contributors who do not meet the criteria for authorship in an acknowledgements section. All funders and sponsors of research must be clearly acknowledged and any competing interests listed.

3.19.7 Researchers must clearly acknowledge all sources used in their research and seek permission from any individuals if a significant amount of their work has been used in the publication.

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3.20 Misconduct in research

The University promotes an organisational culture in which high standards of personal conduct and integrity are expected, academic misconduct and fraud are forbidden, and appropriate steps are taken to deal fairly and firmly when misconduct is alleged or suspected.

The University has specifically identified research misconduct as a disciplinary offence under its general disciplinary procedures as they apply to staff and students, and it will act accordingly in respect of such misconduct under those procedures. Research misconduct, which is misconduct arising in the course of research or its reporting, includes but need not be limited to:

- a) Fabrication;
- b) Falsification;
- c) Misrepresentation of data and/or interests and/or involvement;
- d) Plagiarism; and
- e) Failures to follow accepted procedures or to exercise due care in carrying out responsibilities for:
 - 1.

4 RECOMMENDED CHECKLIST FOR RESEARCHERS

Recommended checklist for researchers

The checklist lists the key points of good practice. Additional information and practical advice can be found in section 4. Further guidance can be found in section 4. A PDF version is available from www.ukisr.org

Before conducting your research, and bearing in mind that subject to legal and ethical requirements, roles and contributions may change:

- 1) Does the proposed research address a genuine need or a specific desire to add to existing knowledge about the subject in question? **Development methods for research into it?**
- 2) Is your research necessary?
- 3) Will you have the necessary skills and resources to conduct the research?
- 4) Have you conducted a risk assessment to determine:
 - a) whether there are any safety or health risks to the research;
 - b) the potential for risks to the organisation, the research or the health, safety and well-being of researchers and research participants; and
 - c) what legal, regulatory or other requirements apply?
- 5) Will your research comply with all legal and ethical requirements and other standards, including those from the Home Office, the Equality Act 2010, or other relevant legislation?
- 6) Will your research comply with all requirements of legislation and good practice relating to health and safety?
- 7) Have you obtained any necessary ethics review (see 4(a) above), especially if it involves animals, human participants, children, material of a sensitive nature, or other vulnerable groups?
- 8) Will your research comply with all requirements of applicable legislation and good practice?
- 9) Are you in compliance with any contracts and financial agreements relating to the project?
- 10) Have you reached an agreement relating to intellectual property?
- 11) Have you reached an agreement relating to collaborative working?
- 12) Have you agreed the roles of researchers and responsibilities?
- 13) Have all conflicts of interest relating to your research been identified, declared, and addressed?
- 14) Are you aware of the guidance from all applicable organisations on misconduct in research?

When conducting your research:

- 1) Are you following the agreed research design for the project?
- 2) Have any changes to the agreed research design been reviewed and approved, if applicable?
- 3) Are you following best practice for the collection, storage and management of data?
- 4) Are agreed roles and responsibilities for data management and data protection being followed?
- 5) Is your research complying with any monitoring and audit requirements?

When finishing your research:

- 1) Will your research and its findings be reported according to a reasonable time frame?
- 2) Will all contributions to the research be acknowledged?
- 3) Are agreements relating to intellectual property, publication and data being complied with?
- 4) Will research data be retained in a secure, accessible form and for the required duration?
- 5) Will your research comply with all applicable legislation and good practice?

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