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Introduction

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.

We recognise that we have a responsibility to deliver excellent outcomes in respect of the public investment that supports our work and to support and protect our staff.

This code of practice sets out clear **expectations** about the research undertaken by Royal Holloway's members of staff, with a view to providing a clear framework for supporting, enhancing, and managing research activity within the University.

Scope

For the purposes of the code research includes all research and research-related activities including knowledge exchange, consultancy and technical services. It covers externally funded, internally funded and unfunded research activities and applies to employed staff, students or other individuals acting on behalf of the College, whether working on the College's premises or elsewhere. This code must be read in conjunction with the policies listed in Annex 1.

Statement of Principles

Everyone involved in research at or with Royal Holloway must adhere to the following principles in line with the Concordat to Support Research Integrity:

- **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 set by this concordat

These core elements of research integrity apply to all aspects of research, including but not limited to, the preparation and submission of grant and project proposals, the publication and dissemination of findings, and the provision of expert review on the proposals or publications of others.

Good Research Practice

General Expectations of Researchers

1. To produce research and research outputs that meet international standards of excellence
2. To seek appropriate funding to support research, impact and knowledge exchange activity
3. To create transformational impacts for individuals, society, and the environment, by collaborating externally and through knowledge exchange
4. To contribute to an excellent research culture by engaging in the wider research activities of their department and institution
5. To provide research leadership
6. To comply with College and external research related policies, codes and concordats (see Annex 1)

Please see: [Enabling Success: Research Expectations](#) for more detail.

Research planning and design

When designing a project, researchers must ensure that they have fully considered the research question and that the design of the activity is appropriate. Whilst planning a research activity, researchers must ensure they have a framework which addresses ethical and legal issues as well as those relating to health and safety, safeguarding, data storage, data sharing and integrity.

Researchers must ensure that they have completed a data management plan, risk assessment and equality and impact assessment at the early stages of the design the research activity and considered the ethical implications of the research. This will help to highlight potential risks and enable the researcher to consider how they will mitigate these risks and seek appropriate support from the College.

Peer Review

The College encourages researchers to act as peer reviewers to review both grant applications and research publications and to act to as ethical reviewers for research projects.

Peer Review must be carried out to the highest professional standards, respecting the confidentiality of the materials and in accordance with any guidelines form the funder, publisher etc.

Conflicts of Interest

A conflict of interest may arise when a person's judgement is influenced by a secondary interest. *Researchers* must make full disclosure of any potential or actual conflict of interest arising from their research. Conflict of interest includes but is not limited to personal or close family affiliation to or financial involvement with an organisation which is sponsoring or providing financial support for the project undertaken by the researcher.

Please see the College [Conflicts of Interests Policy and Procedure](#)

Collaboration

Whilst recognising the need for researchers to protect their own research interests and those of any funding body, the College encourages researchers to collaborate with colleagues within the College and externally.

All collaboration with researchers outside the College and with other external partners must be carried out under terms that are fully understood by all parties concerned. These terms must form part of the contract or collaboration agreement. Researchers must take into account the College's [Intellectual Property Policy](#) and guidance and seek advice from Research and Innovation.

Where collaborations are with organisations outside the UK, researchers should comply with the legal and ethical requirements within both countries. Researchers must also take into account funder and College due diligence requirements (see International Research).

Research Ethics and Legal Requirements

All researchers must incorporate appropriate consideration of ethical issues and legal requirements into the design and management of projects.

Any special standards of research practice and ethical conduct imposed by law (UK or overseas), research funders, professional or statutory bodies or by the College for specific categories of research must be adhered to and it is the responsibility of supervisors to draw the attention of new researchers (including students) to such standards.

Relevant legislation includes but is not limited to the Human Rights Act 1998, the Animals (Scientific Procedures) Act 1986, the Data Protection Act 1998, the Freedom of Information Act 2000, the Human Tissue Act 2004, the Department of Health Research Governance Framework for Health and Social Care 2005, the Mental Capacity Act 2005, the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006, and the Animal Welfare Act 2006

Researchers of all discipline areas are expected to be familiar with and follow the College's [Ethics Policy and processes](#).

Management and Governance of Research

Health and Safety and Wellbeing

Researchers must ensure the dignity, rights, safety and wellbeing of all involved in research and avoid unreasonable risk or harm to them and to all participants in and subjects of research, including humans, animals, the environment and subjects of research. All researchers are required to familiarise themselves with the relevant College policies, including [Health and Safety, Safeguarding and Dignity at Work](#)

Finance

Researchers should ensure that they are familiar with and adhere to the policies and procedures laid down by the College's Financial Regulations with regards to expert accounting input (usually from the Finance Department) into costing and monitoring of research. These include meeting the requirements of the internal monitoring of grant finance and the reporting of expenditure statements to funders. If Royal Holloway is the lead organisation then the lead researcher must also ensure that, where appropriate, all collaborators are aware of these requirements and that their organisations are able to comply with these requirements as necessary.

The lead researcher from Royal Holloway must ensure that the proposal has been produced in line with the College's costing and pricing procedures and policy, as laid down in the internal authorisation procedures.

Externally funded research must be carried out in line with the funder's terms and conditions as well as the College's Financial Regulations. Researchers must ensure that all costs charged to research grant codes are project-specific and auditable.

International Research

When conducting or collaborating on research activities with organisations outside of the UK, Researchers must ensure that collaborators, subcontractors, students and participants involved must comply with UK legislation and the legislation of the countries where the activity is being conducted.

Researchers conducting research outside the UK must ensure appropriate risk assessment, due diligence and insurance process have been completed before the start of the activity. Where appropriate, ethical approval must be sought in the country where the activity is due to take place and a project safeguarding policy accessible to all involved in the research put in place. The approval and documents should be included in the Institutional ethics application.

Research Data Management

Research data is defined in the [College Research Data Management policy](#) as "the recorded information (regardless of the form or the media) necessary to support or validate a research project's observations, findings or outputs". The College recognises that the effective management of research data is a major part of good research practice and that outputs (including data) should be managed in a way that benefits the individual and the College whilst adhering to the requirements of research funders and stakeholders. The College recognises that sharing research data appropriately and responsibly can contribute to the impact of research.

Researchers are expected to familiarise themselves with and adhere to the relevant College policies e.g. [Data Protection, Records Retention and Data Management policies](#).

[Research data](#) may be made open via the College data repository, [Figshare](#) which is managed by the Library.

Publication and Authorship

Any work put forward for publication must be the authors' own and those authors are required to report research and research findings accurately.

A publication must acknowledge all those who have made a significant contribution to it and all authors must have made a significant intellectual contribution to the work. All funding sources and collaboration must be cited and all financial, commercial and other "interest" relating to the work should be declared unless anonymity has been agreed.

Authors must abide by the College's Open Access Policy and all publications should be deposited in the College repository via [Pure](#).

Monitoring and audit

Research projects must comply with any monitoring and audit requirements, whether financial or otherwise. These requirements should be identified and considered at an early stage

Researchers must co-operate with any monitoring and audit undertaken on behalf of a funder, the College or another relevant stakeholder. Researchers should then co-operate with the outcomes of any such monitoring or audit.

Research Culture

Training and mentoring

Researchers must ensure that they have the necessary skills, training and resources to carry out research, taking advantage of opportunities [inside](#) or outside the College.

All researchers should undertake the necessary training appropriate to their discipline, for example in research design, regulatory and ethical approvals and consents, equipment use, safe methods of working, confidentiality, data management, record keeping, and data protection. Records should be kept by the Department or School of all such training. Researchers should also take advantage of mentoring opportunities throughout their careers.

Schools and Departments should have in place systems that allow students (both undergraduate and postgraduate) and new researchers to understand and adopt best practice as quickly as possible. In the case of undergraduate students who carry out research projects they must receive relevant training at the start of the project, and for postgraduate research students this is a mandatory part of their first year training.

Where appropriate all staff, researchers and students should, as part of their training, be made aware of relevant College policies such as this code, Ethics Policy, Financial Regulations, PI Statement of Responsibilities, Health and Safety policies, Data Protection Policy, IP policy and any other relevant guidelines.

Integrity and Openness

Researchers should be honest in respect of their own actions in research and in their responses to the actions of other researchers. This applies to the whole range of research work, including experimental design, generating and analysing data, applying for funding, publishing results, and acknowledging the direct and indirect contribution of colleagues, collaborators and others.

The College encourages researchers to be as open as possible in discussing their work with other researchers and with the public. Where it is appropriate, activity must either take account of the user's perspective or involve users in the planning and implementation stage of the activities that will have a direct impact on them.

While publication of the results of research may need to be delayed for a reasonable period pending protection of intellectual property arising from the research, any such delay should be kept to a minimum. Please see the College [Open Access policy](#).

Once results have been published, researchers should make available relevant data and materials to other researchers, on request, provided that this is consistent with any ethical approvals, consents that cover the data and materials intellectual property considerations and the conditions of any grants or sponsorship. Please see the section on [Research Data Management](#)

Roles and Responsibility

Institutional responsibilities

Primary responsibility for achieving the highest standards of research conduct lies with the individual. However, the College has an important role in ensuring that systems are in place to support and reinforce this. These include:

1. To plan for research excellence by creating strategies, policies and processes that ensure our sustainability as a research institution
2. To facilitate a vibrant research environment that develops good research practice and embeds a culture of research integrity
3. To maintain high quality research facilities and infrastructure to support excellent research
4. To provide central policies and processes that support research needs and strengthen research integrity
5. To provide clear advice, guidance, training and support to enable staff to maximise their research potential

The College also has specific institutional responsibilities under the [Concordat to Support Research Integrity](#). Information and procedures are available on the University website and will be drawn to the attention of all new members of staff and postgraduate research students as part of the induction programme, and to existing staff by means of regular training and development sessions.

Please also see: [Enabling Success: Research Expectations](#)

Researchers (Staff, honorary staff, emeritus staff, subcontractor, collaborator)

Researchers are accountable to the College, research funders, the public and themselves for the work that they conduct. They are responsible for ensuring that they and their research team members are familiar with the ethics policy and related codes and policies. They must ensure that they adhere to College and external codes and policies throughout the lifecycle of the research project.

Researchers must ensure that ethical approval is gained before the start of the research activity and is conducted in line with the approved application. Researchers must ensure that they have sought approval from external (UK and international) bodies where required.

Researchers must ensure that due diligence, safeguarding and health and safety requirements are fully executed before the start of the research activity. Please see the [PI Statement of Responsibilities](#)

Supervisor

The [Code of Practice for Research Degree Students and Supervisors](#) should be adhered to at all times

Supervisors should monitor all stages of the research process, including outlining or drawing up a hypothesis, preparing applications for funding, protocol design, data recording and data analysis, the sorting of primary data and the dissemination of research results through publications and other outputs. Supervisors must also be aware of the broader development needs of research trainees in accordance with best practice in their discipline

Student

The Code of Practice for Research Degree Students and Supervisors should be adhered to at all times. Please see: [Code of Practice for Research Degree Students and Supervisors](#)

Sponsor

The institution will act as a sponsor for research where appropriate. The researcher must complete a declaration form and ensure that they communicate appropriately with the sponsor and their supervisor throughout the project lifecycle.

Head of School and Head of Department and Senior Academic Staff

The creation of a healthy research climate is essential to good research practice. Heads of School, Heads of Department, senior academic staff and research group leaders should ensure that a research climate of mutual respect and cooperation is fostered in which all members of a school, department or research team are encouraged to develop their skills and in which the open exchange of ideas is encouraged.

Heads of Department, Heads of School and other senior staff are responsible for drawing policies and guidelines to the attention of all staff, particularly new researchers, and for signposting training and mentoring opportunities.

Heads of Department and Heads of School or their designates should ensure that appropriate direction of research and supervision of researchers is provided. All staff must receive training in appropriate skills before undertaking supervisory duties, and in particular the supervision of postgraduate and undergraduate research students

Research and Innovation

Research and Innovation (R&I) provides support for research and innovation activities and leads developments that will underpin research excellence and increase the impact of College research. Support is provided for (inter alia) research development, grant application, peer review, knowledge exchange and impact, research related contracts, intellectual policy, technology transfer and commercialisation, safeguarding, ethics and integrity and the REF.

Research Finance

Research Finance provides post award financial support and will produce financial reports for the funder as specified in the funding contract or award letter. They also deal with matters of financial compliance.

Library

The [Research Support team](#) in the Library provides support and guidance to researchers throughout the research cycle to maximise the discoverability and accessibility of their research publications and data.

IT Services

IT Services is responsible for maintaining and developing the IT infrastructure and provides technical support to researchers.

Human Resources

Human Resources (HR) provides advice and support on all matters of employment in the College. This includes recruitment, training and development, health and wellbeing and equality, diversity and inclusion.

Research Misconduct and Breach of the Code

In cases where researchers do not comply with this code or the College considers the project or activity has not been conducted within the approved conditions, this may be considered a case of misconduct.

The [Code of Practice for Inquiring into Allegations of Misconduct in relation to Academic Research and Scientific Activities](#) outlines the policies and procedures when handling allegations.

If anyone considers that there may have been a breach of this code, in the first instance they should raise the matter with the Research Integrity and Ethics Manager.

Further information on the interpretation and application of this policy may be obtained from integrity@rhul.ac.uk

Annex 1: Related College Policies and Codes

See also the College [Policies Hub](#)

- [Anti-Bribery Policy](#)
- [Anti-Money Laundering Policy](#)
- [Code of Practice for Inquiry into Allegations of Misconduct in Relation to Academic Research and Scientific Activity](#)
- [Code of Practice for Research Degree Students and Supervisors](#)
- [Conflict of Interest Policy 2016](#)
- [Data Backup Policy](#)
- [Data Breach Reporting Procedure](#)
- [Data Protection Policy](#)
- [Dignity at work – Anti bullying and harassment Policy](#)
- [Disciplinary Policy and Procedure](#)
- [Enabling Success: Research Expectations](#)
- [Equal Opportunities](#)
- [Research Ethics Policy](#)
- [Freedom of Speech](#)
- [Grievance Policy and Procedure](#)
- [Guidelines on Relationships involving Staff, Students & Others](#)
- [Intellectual Property Policy 2018](#)
- [Open Access Publication Policy](#)
- [Personal Relationships at Work Policy](#)
- Publication Policy (under development)
- [Records Retention Policy](#)
- [Research Costing and Pricing Policy](#)
- [Research Data Management Policy](#)
- [Research Participant Privacy Notice](#)
- [Risk Assessment Guidance](#)
- Safeguarding Policy (under development)
- Travel and insurance policy (under development)
- [Whistleblowing Policy and Procedure](#)

Annex 2: External Guidance

- [RCUK Policy and Guidelines on Governance of Good Research Conduct](#)
- [RCUK Policy and Guidelines on the Governance of Good Research Conduct](#)
- [UKRIO Code of Practice for Research: Promoting good practice and preventing misconduct](#)
- [Recommended Checklist for Researchers](#)
- [The Concordat to Support Research Integrity](#)
- [Research integrity: a landscape study](#)
- [The Code of Practice for the Safety of Social Researchers](#)

Approved by	Executive Board
Date of Approval	11 December 2020
Revised	
Review by	January 2023