

UKCEH Annual Research Integrity Statement 2023

Section 1: Key contact information

Question	Response
1A. Name of organisation	UK Centre for Ecology & Hydrology (UKCEH)
1B. Type of organisation: higher education institution/industry/independent research performing organisation/other (please state)	Independent Research Organisation A registered charity, limited by guarantee
1C. Date statement approved by governing body (DD/MM/YY)	15/05/2024
1D. Web address of organisation's research integrity page (if applicable)	https://www.ceh.ac.uk/research-integrity
1E. Named senior member of staff to oversee research integrity	Name: Dr Doug Wilson, Science Director and Deputy CEO
	Email address: DWilson@ceh.ac.uk
1F. Named member of staff who will act as a first point of contact for anyone wanting more information on matters of research integrity	Name: Anita Petrie, Science Directorate Business Manager
	Email address: Anit@ceh.ac.uk

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



UKCEH are committed to delivering the principles set out in the *Concordat to Support Research Integrity* and incorporate these into our everyday research culture; this is exemplified in our core Values of Teamwork, Excellence, and Integrity. UKCEH are committed to implementing the requirements of the new version of the Concordat, which was set out earlier this year.

We place research integrity at the centre of all our research endeavours and ensure that research excellence is underpinned by the highest standards of honesty, transparency, accountability, rigour, and respect. This is reflected in our Strategy 2025 and is central to the new strategy which will follow from January 2025.

UKCEH operates to UKRI's Good Research and Trusted Research Policies and Processes and has a [Code of Ethics](#) alongside relevant policies and procedures for [Research Integrity](#), [Research Ethics](#), [Conflicts of Interest](#), [Misconduct in Research](#) and [Open Science](#).

UKCEH maintains additional related policies on Whistleblowing, Bullying, Due Diligence, Modern Slavery, Fraud and Bribery, EEDI, safeguarding, Quality, and Intellectual Property.

UKCEH operate two Research Ethics Committees covering activities that relate to Humans (non-clinical) and Animals (non-ASPA). UKCEH also has a Home Office Establishment licence for specific activities in ecological research on wild populations and operates an Animal Welfare Ethical Review Body as required under that licence. Ethics Committee members receive regular training, and in addition to their role in reviewing activities, also act as advocates and champions for research ethics and are available to staff to discuss issues or queries. All committees include at least one external member and include lay members, in line with best practice.

An internal website for Research Ethics provides details of relevant policies, documents, and guidance alongside links to external resources, including UKRIO guidance, events and webinars.

2B. Changes and developments during the period under review

In 2023 UKCEH delivered awareness raising sessions for research staff on research integrity, misconduct, conflict of interest and research ethics. There were 229 attendees across two sessions delivered online. Additionally, several open sessions were held for all staff on our Code of Ethics, Safeguarding and Modern Slavery.



In 2023 UKCEH developed and provided Guidance on using AI tools in research outputs and Guidance on using AI tools for generating scripts, code and programs; both of which addressed emerging AI tools, particularly LLMs, and their potential use in a research context and the related ethics and integrity dimensions.

In 2023 UKCEH reviewed the Open Access Publishing requirements for Monographs, in line with UKRI requirements and developed procedures and provided guidance documents for all staff, highlighting at fortnightly all staff meetings.

UKCEH delivered staff training and awareness sessions on the new FAIR Data Stewardship Wizard tool; and a number of open discussion sessions were held on Digital Research Infrastructure, including enabling FAIR assets to inform UKCEH's new [Digital Strategy](#).

In 2023, UKCEH rolled out a new reward and recognition platform UKCEH Rewards, designed to provide a quick and accessible way of recognising and rewarding staff and students who have carried out great work in line with our values (Integrity, excellence, and teamwork). To date 9% of recognition awards have been directly linked to Integrity.

2C. Reflections on progress and plans for future developments

UKCEH continues to make progress on research ethics and integrity. In 2023, focus has been given to research ethics and whilst there is still additional work to do we will turn attention to our research integrity more specifically. In 2023 we commenced a review of our wider offer on research integrity across all career stages. This review will be completed in early 2024 and will make a series of recommendations and actions.

In 2024 we will provide:

- renewed training and awareness for all staff on research ethics,
- dedicated internal website on research integrity to simplify findability of information and resources,
- regular open sessions on Research Ethics and Integrity topics of interest. These may allow discussions on ethical dilemmas, errors and mistakes in research practice reproducibility, and research improvement,
- a Forum across similar research institutes to allow for shared learning, and sharing best practice,



- an AI symposium and development of an AI Framework for UKCEH, including dimensions of ethics and integrity.

UKCEH is investigating for 2024:

- incorporation of research ethics and integrity topics in new staff inductions,
- creation of research integrity champions, or similar network,
- training processes and procedures for research integrity, considering a 3-step approach - Early career development programme (ECDP), mid-career training and training for senior or more experienced staff members.
- Further exploring the Royal Society Integrity in Practice toolkit to support our work on research culture.

2D. Case study on good practice (optional)

NA

Section 3: Addressing research misconduct

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

UKCEH has relevant policies and procedures for Research Integrity, Research Ethics, Conflicts of Interest, and Misconduct in Research. UKCEH's Behaviour Framework and rewards system reinforces our commitment to driving a culture centred around our core values of Excellence, Teamwork, and Integrity

UKCEH maintains additional related policies on Whistleblowing, Bullying, Modern Slavery, Fraud and Bribery.

The Research Integrity Policy and the Misconduct in Research Procedure will be reviewed in 2024, including updating the responsible roles within UKCEH for raising formal allegations, or informal and confidential discussions.

There were no formal allegations or investigations of research misconduct in 2023.



In 2023, one incident relating to research ethics was reported and investigated according to the Research Ethics Policy procedures; dismissed after preliminary investigation, no evidence of misconduct.

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			
Falsification	0			
Plagiarism	0			
Failure to meet legal, ethical and professional obligations	1	0	0	0
Misrepresentation (eg data; involvement; interests; qualification; and/or publication history)	0			
Improper dealing with allegations of misconduct	0			
Multiple areas of concern (when received in a single allegation)	0			
<i>Other*</i>	0			
Total:				

***If you listed any allegations under the ‘Other’ category, please give a brief, high-level summary of their type here. Do not give any identifying or confidential information when responding.**

NA