

# Template: annual statement on research integrity

If you have any questions about this template, please contact:  
riconcordat@ukcori.org.

## Section 1: Key contact information

Question	Response
<b>1A. Name of organisation</b>	Leeds Trinity University
<b>1B. Type of organisation:</b>  higher education institution/industry/independent research performing organisation/other (please state)	Higher Education Institution
<b>1C. Date statement approved by governing body (DD/MM/YY)</b>	26/03/26
<b>1D. Web address of organisation's research integrity page (if applicable)</b>	<a href="https://www.leedstrinity.ac.uk/research/">https://www.leedstrinity.ac.uk/research/</a>
<b>1E. Named senior member of staff to oversee research integrity</b>	Name: <i>Professor Karen Sayer</i>
	Email address: <i>K.Sayer@leedstrinity.ac.uk</i>
<b>1F. Named member of staff who will act as a first point of contact for anyone wanting more information on matters of research integrity</b>	Name: <i>Dr Tina Conkar</i>
	Email address: <i>T.Conkar@Leedstrinity.ac.uk</i>

## 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

Please describe how the organisation maintains high standards of research integrity and promotes positive research culture. It should include information on the support provided to researchers to understand standards, values and behaviours, such as training, support and guidance for researchers at different career stages/ disciplines. You may find it helpful to consider the following broad headings:

- Policies and systems
- Communications and engagement
- Culture, development and leadership
- Monitoring and reporting

Leeds Trinity University (LTU) acknowledges the importance of research integrity and adherence to the legal, ethical and professional development frameworks in research. The University is dedicated to developing and maintaining higher standards to promote an ethical research culture and excellent research practices. As such, it is completely committed to continuous improvement and adaption to changes in research practice in line with the evolving national and international research good practices and policies.

Leeds Trinity University is fully committed to the principle, promotion, and protection of freedom of speech within the law. This includes the principle of academic freedom for its academic staff. As part of this commitment, the University's Code of Practice on Freedom of Speech and Expression sets out its values and expectations in relation to freedom of speech, the steps the University will take to promote and secure freedom of speech within the law and summarises how the University will ensure compliance with the Code. The Code is available on the University's dedicated webpage [Freedom of speech and expression - About - Leeds Trinity University](#)

'The University's origin in 1966 as a higher educational establishment focused on applied skills and professional practice meant that applied research focused on knowledge exchange, CPD, policy, engagement and impact was the strategic focus, though the HEI has participated in every research assessment exercise from inception (RAE and REF). As such, research policies and processes have been in place for many years, including a

university-level ethics committee, establishment of a university-level Research and Knowledge Exchange Committee, informal and latterly formal research leadership at Faculty/School level. Implementation and management of research processes have periodically altered with periods of institutional restructuring.

Despite challenges reflected in the sector (staff turnover, limited resources, uncertainty), strategic commitment to research is reflected in the University's Strategy:

(<https://www.leedstrinity.ac.uk/media/site-assets/documents/key-documents/pdfs/strategic-plan-2021-2026.pdf>).

Aspirationally, the University has a clear vision of its research contribution to society, but the infrastructure to enable these changes both in terms of staff skills and knowledge, and systems and policies, are a work in progress, reflecting both current economic uncertainty and limited prior strategic investment and experience in research in some disciplinary areas.

The University acknowledges that it has many areas of excellent research as reflected in the Research Excellence Framework results, but also that more needs to be done to embed research knowledge on good research practice and policy for its research practitioners. Since the last REF exercise in 2021, the University introduced a University Research Lead, to lead on matters of Research Culture e.g. establishing a working group across academic and professional service teams to develop and embed open research practice at the University.

Policies and systems:

Policies and systems at LTU reflect its history as a small institution. The University has an excellent reputation around the quality of its systems for teaching, and it has invested heavily in the appropriate infrastructure to manage this over the years. As a small and specialist GuildHE institution, the positive growth of its research and PGR capacity in recent years has not yet been matched with systems infrastructure expenditure, and this is reflected in the University's reliance on manual systems and policies which are only adequately fit for purpose, but which do not always reflect the best practice recommended for the sector. This has been recognised in the last year and support from the Executive is being provided to rectify this and invest in new research systems infrastructure. The Research and Knowledge Exchange Office (RKEO) are also working closely with the University's People and Development Team to embed training support infrastructure around Research in our annual induction programmes and refreshers. All research policies pertaining to staff and PGRs are also being reviewed in line with sector good practice.

Communications and engagement:

The University has a robust communications and engagement system through its Intranet system which is used to regularly publish institutional news. The RKEO use this system proactively to communicate training and development opportunities around research environment and uses MS Teams to reach targeted research audiences such as 'Professors and Readers Group', 'Post graduate Researchers', 'ECRs' and 'Research Cafe' to name a few.

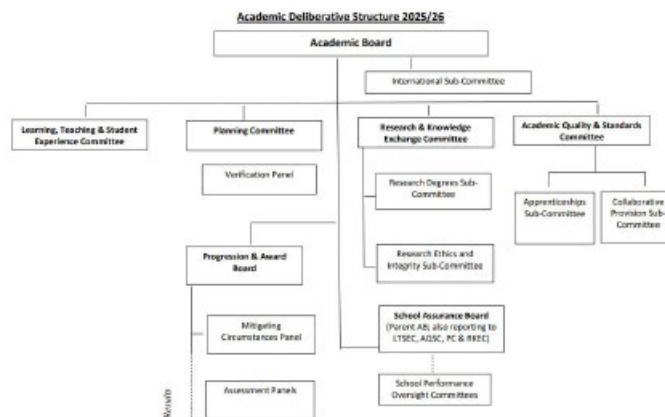
#### Culture, development and leadership:

There is a strong culture at the University of unity aligned to its Catholic Mission which provides a supportive environment for its staff and students. Research at the University is overseen by the Deputy Vice Chancellor/Provost. They are supported by a Dean of Research ( currently interim Dean of Research) for all research matters and the RKEO Office, and a Director of Post Graduate Research Studies.

#### Monitoring and reporting:

The University's Academic Deliberative Structure provides the main route for monitoring and reporting. The structure for this is shown below. The (Interim) Dean of Research Chairs the Research and Knowledge Exchange Committee (RKEC) which has oversight for Research at the University and 2 sub committees report into RKEC. The University Research Ethics and Integrity Sub Committee (UREISC) and the Research Degrees Sub Committee (RDSC).

The academic deliberative structure for the University in 24/25 and 25/26:



**2B. Changes and developments during the period under review**

Please provide an update on any changes made during the period, such as new initiatives, training, developments, also ongoing changes that are still underway. Drawing on Commitment 3 of the Concordat, please note any new or revised policies, practices and procedures to support researchers; training on research ethics and research integrity; training and mentoring opportunities to support the development of researchers' skills throughout their careers.

In the last year, the University has undertaken the following towards improvement to its research environment and practices:

**Strategic:**

- Initiated a year-long services review that will include all professional services at the University including the Research and Knowledge Exchange Office. The Review will establish if current structures and skills are fit for purpose and what additional investment is needed.
- Undertaken an external audit of the University Research and Knowledge Exchange Office.

**Operational:**

- Invested in improvements in targeted research training and development working with external providers including Vitae, UKRIO and Walcott Communications.
- Introduced a Research Competencies training policy and plan across all research career stages and a Code of Practice for Good Research in line with UKRIO good practice guidance.
- Introduced a supporting internal training plan in support of the above.
- Initiated a review and schedule to rewrite and/or refresh all its research policies.

## 2C. Reflections on progress and plans for future developments

This should include a reflection on the previous year's activity including a review of progress and impact of initiatives if known relating to activities referenced in the previous year's statement. Note any issues that have hindered progress, e.g. resourcing or other issues.

2024-2025 was a transitional and challenging year for the University in terms of the amount of change experienced and staff turnover/losses in key service areas due both to voluntary severance and resource limitations. The University is not alone in this experience, as this has been the case across the sector.

Many services including the Research and Knowledge Exchange Office (RKEO), which has oversight of research matters at the University, operated with reduced staff and additionally the loss of the Dean of Research towards the latter end of the academic year. That said many positive aspects were achieved during the year.

- Specialised training and a writing retreat was arranged for our upcoming ECR community.
- Dedicated support for our ESRs was provided through our outgoing Dean of Research.
- We introduced a Research Competencies training policy and plan across all research career stages.
- We introduced a Code of Practice for Good Research in line with UKRIO good practice guidance.
- We worked with Vitae to provide dedicated online training related to Research ethics and Integrity, Research Funding, Impact and AI. These were focused on providing training skills capacity at the University, so 'Train the Trainer' aspects formed part of this training.
- We worked with UKRIO and introduced the online course 'An Introduction to Research Integrity' which we have made available to all our staff and PGR community.
- We implemented a review of all our Research Policies and practices with a view to moving these from being satisfactory for purpose to more in line with sector good practice and guidance. This ongoing review will continue into 2025-2026.

While resource challenges continue to set some limitations on the scale and scope of activities and support we can provide around the University Research environment and practices, the team supported by the Interim Dean of Research and members of the Executive, continue to look at how to innovate and maximise impact with the available resources.

**2D. Case study on good practice (optional)**

Please describe an anonymised brief, exemplar case study that can be shared as good practice with other organisations. A wide range of case studies are valuable, including small, local implementations. Case studies may also include the impact of implementations or lessons learned.

*[Please insert response]*

## Section 3: Addressing research misconduct

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

- a brief summary of relevant organisation policies/ processes (e.g. research misconduct procedure, whistle-blowing policy, bullying/harassment policy; appointment of a third party to act as confidential liaison for persons wishing to raise concerns) and brief information on the periodic review of research misconduct processes (e.g. date of last review; any major changes during the period under review; date when processes will next be reviewed).
- information on how the organisation creates and embeds a research environment in which all staff, researchers and students feel comfortable to report instances of misconduct (e.g. code of practice for research, whistleblowing, research misconduct procedure, informal liaison process, website signposting for reporting systems, training, mentoring, reflection and evaluation of policies, practices and procedures).
- anonymised key lessons learned from any investigations into allegations of misconduct which either identified opportunities for improvements in the organisation's investigation procedure and/or related policies / processes/ culture or which showed that they were working well.

The University treats research misconduct seriously and we do have policies and practice in place for our staff, PGR and undergraduate cohort to report and capture this. More improvements are needed to bring our staff and PGR Research Misconduct Policy in line UKRIO's recommended structures.

Research Misconduct by staff and PGRs is handled by our University Research Ethics and Integrity Committee which is a subcommittee of the University Research and Knowledge Exchange Committee (RKEC) which also has oversight of the Research Degree Sub Committee (RDSC). The University has a Staff/PGR Research Misconduct Policy and Procedure which is one of the policies that is being overhauled as part of the policy review process. The University also has in place Whistleblowing and Bullying and Harassment Policies.

Research Misconduct by undergraduates is captured by our Academic Quality Services Team and reported annually. A separate Research Misconduct Policy for our Undergraduate and Postgraduate taught exists for this.

All research and university policies and guidance are signposted for colleagues on the University's Intranet site and for staff also in the Code of Practice for Good Research.

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

Please complete the table on the number of **formal investigations completed during the period under review** (including investigations which completed during this period but started in a previous academic year). Information from ongoing investigations should not be submitted.

An organisation's procedure may include an initial, preliminary, or screening stage to determine whether a formal investigation needs to be completed. These allegations should be included in the first column but only those that proceeded past this stage, to formal investigations, should be included in the second column.

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				
Falsification				
Plagiarism				
Failure to meet legal, ethical and professional obligations				
Misrepresentation (eg data; involvement; interests; qualification; and/or publication history)				

Improper dealing with allegations of misconduct				
Multiple areas of concern (when received in a single allegation)				
<i>Other*</i>	3	3	1	2
<b>Total:</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>
<p><b>*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.</b></p>				
<p>Level 6 Education Student – Module PED6444 Dissertation  This student had reportedly breached the ethics guidelines as questionnaires were administered by a third party, with no ethical approval. The supervisor claimed that they were unaware of this taking place.  Initially, the case was upheld but the student submitted an appeal, and it was found that the student had followed a video on ethical approval on the Moodle Page and there was a misunderstanding with the tutor and student. The case was partially upheld.</p> <p>Level 6 Psychology Student – Module PSY6145 Research Project  This was a case of research misconduct and AI. The student had used transcripts as evidence which did not align to the appendices submitted in the work. It was found that AI was used to write the written text of the assignment, and the transcripts and research was fabricated, or the student had used AI (it is unknown which one for definite, but the case was upheld).</p> <p>Level 5 Psychology Student – Module PSY5093 Research Skills  The submission indicated that the student had used a semi-structured interview which had ethical approval, however, this was untrue. The whole cohort had to use an anonymous online qualitative survey, which did receive ethical approval provided by the tutor.  This case was upheld.</p>				