

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
1A. Name of organisation	University of the Built Environment (From June 2025, University of the Built Environment will be a trading name for University College of Estate Management (UCEM) until all legal and Privy Council (this relates to the Royal Charter) matters have been completed. This may take up to a year – see Announcement of new name - University of the Built Environment and Brand FAQs - University of the Built Environment)
1B. Type of organisation: higher education institution/industry/independent research performing organisation/other (please state)	We are a Higher Education Provider registered with the Office for Students UKPRN 10008173. Founded in 1919, incorporated by Royal Charter (RC000125) on 22 August 1922 and has been a registered independent charitable institution (Registered Charity Number 313223) in England and Wales since 24 May 1963.
1C. Date statement approved by governing body (DD/MM/YY)	17 th September 2026, Board of Trustees
1D. Web address of organisation's research integrity page (if applicable)	Research - University of the Built Environment

1E. Named senior member of staff to oversee research integrity	Name: Professor Angela Lee
	Email address: a.lee@ube.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: Dr Jaydene Witchell
	Email address: research@ube.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

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

The University of the Built Environment is committed to conducting excellent research with integrity. We promote individual and institutional responsibility for the highest standards of research practice, supported through clear policies, robust governance, effective training, and a research culture founded on honesty, transparency, respect, accountability and academic rigour.

This statement reaffirms our commitment to the principles of the Universities UK *Concordat to Support Research Integrity*. It is reviewed annually by the University's

Research Committee, considered by Academic Board, and approved by the Board of Trustees.

Policies and Systems

As part of our ongoing commitment to research integrity and research excellence, we continue to review and enhance our policies, procedures and governance arrangements.

During the reporting period, we reviewed:

- Research Ethics Procedure (including associated guidance and supporting documentation).
- Research Data Management Policy
- Academic Staff Development Policy
- Intellectual Property Policy
- Research Implementation Plan
- Research Ethics Panel Terms of Reference
- Postgraduate Research Student Appeals Procedure
- Research Misconduct Procedure and Panels Terms of Reference
- Open Access Policy
- Research Committee Terms of Reference
- Research Degree Subcommittee Terms of Reference
- Code of Practice for Research

We have also developed a number of new policies and frameworks, including:

- REF Code of Practice.

- Research Excellence Framework Subcommittee Terms of Reference

Significant effort this year has been devoted to developing and consulting on the University's first REF Code of Practice, ensuring that it reflects the principles of fairness, transparency, inclusivity and accountability. The Code has now been submitted for external review and represents an important milestone as the University prepares for its first REF submission in 2029.

The principles underpinning all our research policies include honesty in conducting and reporting research, rigour in methodology and analysis, transparency in declaring interests, respect for research participants and communities, and accountability to funders, partners and wider society. Updated policies and guidance are communicated to staff and students through established channels, supported by training and information sessions, and made readily accessible through the University's policy webpages.

To further champion researcher development, the University became an official member of Vitae in March 2026, providing all staff and students with access to Vitae's professional development resources. We are seeking ways to actively embed the Vitae Researcher Development Framework into our practices and will continue this work into the next academic year.

Communications and Engagement

We continue to invest in mechanisms that support a connected and collaborative research community.

Our dedicated Microsoft Teams research space serves as an active forum where colleagues share funding opportunities, calls for papers, events, research achievements and requests for collaboration or feedback. The platform also provides direct access to research policies, guidance and resources through our SharePoint repository.

Research successes and achievements are regularly celebrated through the University's weekly *Bulletin* newsletter, ensuring that research remains visible across the institution. External research news and successes are further promoted through the University's marketing and communications activities.

The University also maintains active engagement with the wider research and higher education community. We are members of GuildHE and ARMA and maintain connections with UKRIO, UKRI, Vitae, the UK Parliament Knowledge Exchange Unit and other sector bodies. These relationships help ensure that staff remain

informed of developments in research policy, governance, integrity and best practice at both national and international levels.

Culture, Development and Leadership

The University remains committed to fostering a supportive, inclusive and collegial research culture in which all staff are encouraged to engage in research and scholarly activity.

Our monthly virtual Research Coffee Mornings continue to provide an informal and supportive environment for colleagues to exchange ideas, discuss emerging research opportunities and develop collaborations. These sessions have been well attended and have resulted in several new partnerships and interdisciplinary initiatives.

Research mentoring is available to colleagues at different stages of their research careers, helping to build confidence, capability and research leadership across the institution. Staff are encouraged to engage with research activity, seek external funding, develop collaborations and contribute to the University's growing research profile.

As the University continues to expand its research activity and prepare for REF 2029, particular emphasis has been placed on creating a culture that values integrity, openness, inclusivity and continuous improvement. Research leadership is provided through the Research Committee and Academic Board, supported by the Research Office and senior academic staff.

Monitoring and Reporting

The Research Office oversees research administration and monitoring, providing oversight of research activity, funding applications, outputs, engagement and indicators of esteem. Research activity is also considered through the Professional Development Review (PDR) process, ensuring that research ambitions and achievements are appropriately recognised and supported.

Research performance and activity are reported annually through a Research Report to the Board of Trustees, which is also published on the University's website. In addition, the University prepares an annual Mock REF report to assess progress, identify areas for development and support strategic planning towards REF 2029.

Through these mechanisms, the University continues to evaluate and strengthen

its research environment, ensuring that research is conducted responsibly, ethically and with integrity while supporting our strategic ambition to grow research excellence, impact and capacity.

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.

During the reporting period, the University has continued to strengthen its research environment and research integrity framework through a range of policy developments, researcher support initiatives and preparations for future growth in research and postgraduate provision.

A significant area of activity has been the development and consultation of the University's first REF Code of Practice. The Code has been developed in accordance with the principles of fairness, transparency, accountability and inclusivity, with extensive staff engagement throughout the process. This represents an important milestone in the University's preparations for its first REF submission and has helped further embed discussions around responsible research assessment, research quality and research culture across the institution.

The University has also continued preparations for the introduction of Postgraduate Research (PGR) provision in 2026/27. This has involved the development of key procedures, governance arrangements and supporting documentation to ensure a robust and supportive research degree environment. Work is also underway to establish a dedicated virtual research environment for PGR students and supervisors, providing access to resources, guidance, training and opportunities for collaboration. In parallel, marketing and recruitment materials are being developed to support the launch of the University's doctoral provision and to communicate our research strengths and supervisory expertise.

To support researcher development and engagement, the University has introduced its first virtual "Shut Up and Write" sessions for staff. While writing retreats and writing sessions have previously been offered in person, attendance was limited for colleagues. The introduction of a virtual format has increased

accessibility and inclusivity, providing researchers with dedicated time and peer support for writing activities regardless of location. Initial feedback has been positive, and the sessions are expected to become a regular feature of the University's researcher development offer.

Alongside these developments, the University has continued to promote research integrity, ethics and good research practice through ongoing communications, mentoring, researcher development activities and policy dissemination. Research mentoring remains available to staff at different career stages, while regular research events, coffee mornings and networking opportunities continue to support the development of research skills, collaboration and a positive research culture.

Collectively, these initiatives demonstrate the University's continued commitment to supporting researchers throughout their careers while building the infrastructure, systems and culture necessary to sustain future growth in research and doctoral education.

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.

This is our fourth annual statement on research integrity.

We believe we are continuing to make meaningful progress in developing a strong research culture at the University. However, research activity has inevitably slowed this year, as many colleagues have been significantly engaged in preparing for the launch of research degrees. As we remain a relatively small research team, this has required a considerable collective effort. We are aiming to launch our research degree programmes next year, marking a significant milestone in our development as a research-active institution.

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.

As the University of the Built Environment has expanded its research activity, one area of good practice has been the development of a more diverse and inclusive approach to ethical review. Rather than restricting membership of the Research Ethics Panel solely to academic researchers, the University has intentionally included professional services colleagues from a range of functions across the institution.

This approach was introduced in recognition that ethical research extends beyond disciplinary expertise. Professional services staff bring valuable perspectives relating to student support, equality, diversity and inclusion, information governance, learning support, operations and wider institutional practice. Their involvement helps ensure that ethical scrutiny considers not only methodological and disciplinary issues, but also the potential impact of research on participants, communities and stakeholders.

The revised panel composition has strengthened discussions around participant welfare, accessibility, data management and inclusive research design. It has also encouraged wider institutional engagement with research integrity by increasing awareness and understanding of research ethics beyond the academic community.

An additional benefit has been the creation of stronger relationships between academic and professional services colleagues, helping to embed a shared responsibility for research quality and integrity across the University. Feedback from panel members indicates that the diversity of experience and viewpoints contributes to more balanced and constructive ethical review discussions.

A key lesson learned is that smaller institutions can enhance research ethics processes without significant additional resource by drawing upon expertise that already exists within the organisation. Broadening participation in ethical review can strengthen decision-making, promote institutional ownership of research integrity and help ensure that ethical considerations are viewed through multiple lenses rather than solely through disciplinary perspectives.

The University intends to continue developing this approach as research activity grows, including through the introduction of postgraduate research provision, where robust and inclusive ethical review processes will play a central role in supporting a positive research culture.

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, whistle-blowing, 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 of the Built Environment's Research Misconduct Procedure sets out the standards expected of all those involved in research and defines behaviours and activities that may constitute research misconduct. The procedure provides a clear framework for raising, assessing and investigating allegations of research misconduct, ensuring that concerns are handled fairly, transparently and proportionately when research conduct falls below the standards expected by the University.

Approved in September 2023, the procedure is based on the UK Research Integrity Office (UKRIO) *Procedure for the Investigation of Misconduct in Research (2023)* and aligns with the principles of the *Concordat to Support Research Integrity*. The procedure includes formal screening and investigation stages, provision for independent external membership during investigations, and a defined appeals process. Supporting appendices provide additional guidance for handling cases that involve multiple institutions or international collaborators, and outline potential

outcomes and actions arising from investigations.

The Research Misconduct Procedure is complemented by a suite of policies that support responsible research conduct, including those relating to research ethics, data management, authorship and publication. These policies are publicly available via the Research section of the University's website.

Overall responsibility for research integrity, governance and academic ethics rests with the Associate Dean (Research), who serves as the University's first point of contact for research integrity matters. The Associate Dean (Research) is also the University's Named Person for allegations of research misconduct, with contact details available on both the public website and staff intranet.

The University also maintains policies relating to whistleblowing and bullying and harassment, with clear guidance on how these procedures interact with the Research Misconduct Procedure. For example, allegations relating to research misconduct raised under the Whistleblowing Policy will normally be investigated through the Research Misconduct Procedure to ensure an appropriate and consistent process.

As a developing research institution, the University has experienced no reported cases of research misconduct during the reporting period. Nevertheless, the University remains committed to maintaining robust policies, promoting awareness of good research practice, and fostering a culture in which research is conducted with integrity, transparency, accountability and respect.

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

***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.**

N/A