This Report was received by the Council of the University of East Anglia on 26th November 2025.

Annual Report on Research Integrity 24/25

Section 1: Key contact information

Question	Response	
1A. Name of organisation	University of East Anglia (UEA)	
1B. Type of organisation:	Higher Education Institution	
1C. Date statement approved by governing body	26th November 2025	
1D. Web address of organisation's research integrity page	https://www.uea.ac.uk/research/about-uea-research-and-impact/integrity	
1E. Named senior member of staff to oversee research integrity	Name: Professor Julian Blow	
	Email address: j.blow@uea.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 Kate Russell	
	Email address: kate.russell@uea.ac.uk	

Section 2: Promoting high standards of research integrity and positive research culture. Description of actions and activities undertaken

Summary

This Report is produced annually for the University Research Executive to consider and is presented thereafter to the University's Senate and Council to approve. To meet the requirements of the *Concordat to Support Research Integrity*, the Report provides:

- a summary of actions and activities that have been undertaken to support and strengthen understanding and the application of research integrity issues during the period of the 1st August 2024 to 31st July 2025;
- a statement on the processes the University has in place for dealing with allegations of misconduct in research;
- a high-level statement on any allegations of research misconduct in the reporting period, and a summary table of the number and types of research misconduct allegations reported to the organisation and investigations undertaken; and,
- will be made available to the public on the University's Research Integrity webpage once approved.

As this Summary has been written as a stand-alone document, it contains text which is repeated from the previous year where it covers the University's Research Integrity Statement, governance structure and procedures.

The University is fully committed to ensuring that all research undertaken by staff and students is carried out to the highest professional standards of research integrity, and that all researchers uphold the principles set out in the *Concordat to Support Research Integrity*. The term 'Research Integrity' has been adopted internationally to describe "the core principles and responsibilities that should be common to all good research".[1]

Maintaining and developing the University's commitment to high standards of research integrity and ethics are a key component of the University's Research and Innovation Strategy 2024-30. They are also embedded in the University's core values: Ambition, Collaboration, Empowerment, and Respect; and in the University Strategy 2030.

Responsibility for maintaining the highest standards of research integrity at the University rests with the Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Research and Innovation (PVC R&I). The PVC R&I may be contacted using the email address j.blow@uea.ac.uk. The University's Research and Innovation Services (RIN) support the PVC R&I and have a Research Integrity Manager who manages RIN's responsibilities in this area including promoting the culture of research integrity within the University. RIN is also the first point of contact for any queries on the relevant policies or

---

[1] *'The Concordat to Support Research Integrity (2019)'.* Available at:
https://www.universitiesuk.ac.uk/topics/research-and-innovation/concordat-research-integrity.

processes to follow and can be contacted using the email address researchintegrity@uea.ac.uk; the Associate Director (Postgraduate Research) would be the first point of contact for Postgraduate Research students and their supervisors. RIN also has formal nominated representatives who act as legal representatives (under the Health Research Authority's (HRA) Sponsor requirements) for all NHS-related studies in accordance with the HRA's *UK Policy Framework for Health and Social Care Research* (HRA Framework) and can be contacted using the email address researchsponsor@uea.ac.uk. RIN further advises on ethical, legal and regulatory requirements, and on behalf of the University submits annually an Insurance Assurance and Annual Report to the Office of Research Integrity (ORI) to renew UEA's research misconduct assurance. In doing so, the University remains eligible to apply for or receive US Public Health Service research funds.

The University has an overarching committee, the University Research Ethics Committee (UREC), to define the University's *Research Ethics Policy* and operational principles. It also has oversight of the University's 10 Research Ethics Committees (S-RECs). UREC is led by a Chair appointed by the PVC R&I, and is constituted from the S-REC Chairs, the Associate Deans for Research (ADR), the Data Protection Officer, the Research Integrity Manager, a Lay Member, and co-opted experts when required. UREC is a Committee of the University's Senate. Upon appointment, new UREC members are invited to an introductory meeting with the UREC Chair and UREC Secretary to discuss the activities undertaken by UREC.

To promote best practice in the University, there is a standing agenda item for each UREC meeting under which UREC members can raise issues/queries to air and share with their colleagues and seek comments pertaining to best practice which is cascaded down to researchers in their Faculties/Schools.

The S-RECs provide ethics reviews of UEA student and staff (including honorary positions) projects and teaching modules. They also undertake ethics reviews of internally-funded impact activities in support of the University's stance that ethics issues should be considered throughout the complete lifecycle of a project. Ethics reviews are also undertaken for academics in the Norwich Biosciences Institutes as agreed under Home Office regulations.

UEA's ethics review processes support best practices in research ethics, and they are consistent, coherent and well-informed. The contribution of the Ethics Review Chairs to University work is recognised though a workload allocation. Ethically sound research is promoted as a priority by the University's ethics review bodies, and their starting position is an intention to provide ethics approval. Following the full consideration of an ethics application submission, the S-RECs will issue a formal notice of the outcome of the review to the researcher, indicating whether or not ethics approval has been given. The S-REC will deal with any appeals against its decision in accordance with the University's *Ethics Review Appeal Procedures*. The S-REC may withdraw or suspend ethics approval of an ongoing research project as a result of serious concerns regarding its conduct or ethics issues. This may be as a result of receiving a report of an Adverse Event.

During the reporting period, a total of 2083 ethics applications were reviewed by the University's S-RECs of which 2008 were given ethics approval during the reporting year. In addition, UREC reviewed 68 ethics applications for market research/research for internal

evaluations mainly submitted by the University's Central Professional Services and the Students' Union; 67 of these applications were approved during the reporting year.

As a supporter of the *Concordat to Support Research Integrity*, the University is committed to upholding the Concordat's core values of honesty, rigour, transparency and open communication, care and respect, and accountability. UEA's focus remains on promoting good research practice, fostering a culture of research integrity and providing support for researchers to meet the requirements of the updated and strengthened Concordat, details of which are provided in the four sections below:

Policies and Systems

The University has an established set of research integrity policies, procedures and guidelines, which provide a framework for the highest standards of personal conduct in research for all UEA staff and students. These are available on RIN's Research Integrity and Ethics portal pages:

- *Guidelines on Good Practice in Research*
- *Research Ethics Policy* (supplemented with over 30 *Ethics Guidance Notes* covering a range of topics)
- *Ethics Review Appeal Procedures*
- *Policy for Approving the Integrity of UEA Research and Innovation Related Activities and Funding*
- *Procedures for Dealing with Allegations of Misconduct in Research*
- *Procedures for Investigating Allegations of Research Misconduct Made Against Students*
- *Joint NNUH/UEA Standard Operating Procedures* (for healthcare research)
- *Open Access Policy*
- *Research Data Management Policy*
- *Research Data Management Procedures and Guidance*

The University has a rolling programme of reviews for its research integrity policies, procedures and guidelines to ensure that they remain fit for purpose. UREC has been given responsibility to comment on and approve those under review before being considered further by the University Research Executive and endorsed by Senate. As part of each review, there will be engagement with relevant internal stakeholders. RIN will notify staff and students of the reviews using the Staff and Student e-Bulletins, and will also work with the Heads of Schools to ensure that academics and researchers are aware of the revisions. Training and/or guidance will be provided as required.

When confirming an offer of employment, appointees are advised of a range of University policies, both general and specific, that they will be required to comply with and where these can be found. At induction, line managers ensure that new team members undertake any relevant available training and/or are provided with time to familiarise themselves with relevant policies and procedures that are applicable to their role.

The University is also required to comply with UK legislation relating to research, as well as Concordats and codes of practice issued by funding bodies and collaborating organisations. The

University has a longstanding subscription to the UK Research Integrity Office (UKRIO) and UEA researchers can access a wealth of research integrity resources free of charge from UKRIO's webpages. Since May 2020, UKRIO has been holding regular webinars on research integrity and related issues, which are free for UEA researchers to attend. These have been promoted to UEA's researchers via RIN's Research Integrity and Ethics portal pages, who actively take part and engage with these across the University. Members of the UREC often contributing to webinars and offering guidance.

To ensure that the University maintains its high ethical standards, the University has an online system, Ethics Monitor, to support the University's ethics review of projects (including research, UEA-funded impact activities, and market research/research for internal evaluations), which is used by staff and students across the relevant disciplines and funding schemes. Ethics Monitor is an invaluable tool to:

- Relieve the demands on staff time from operating a paper-based system, releasing time to enable a greater proactive approach to research ethics management.
- Streamline processes ensuring consistency across the organisation, adding to funder confidence in the University's delivery of ethical research and enhancing research integrity.
- Provide a single source of information for reference, case tracking, audit and reporting. Much of which was being carried out manually from diverse data sources.
- Assure transparency and assist with monitoring, comprehensive reporting and compliance for data protection, Office for Students institutional funding, FOIA, and research funding organisations.
- Support the training of researchers and staff involved with the review of ethics and ensuring research integrity.

The response from users has been incredibly positive, and the University is continuously developing the system in line with feedback from users.

Ethics Monitor has also been developed to record NHS ethics reviews and/or HRA governance reviews for studies sponsored by the UEA that fall under the *UK Policy Framework for Health and Social Care s*ought via the external Integrated Research Application System (IRAS system).

The consideration of ethical issues during the complete lifecycle of a project (including impact activities) is part of good research practice within the University. The University requires mandatory ethics review of impact projects funded from its AHRC, ESRC, and MRC Impact Accelerator Award (IAA) funding streams. Ethics reviews are also mandatory for relevant activities funded from the University's internal funding schemes: UEA PVC Impact Fund; UEA App Development Competition, before the funding for these two schemes is released to successful applicants. The forms and processes for these ethics reviews have been subsumed within the University's online ethics review system. It is also mandatory for a proportion of the University's research grant applications to the Research Councils and the NIHR to undergo internal peer review prior to submission. These reviews are undertaken by designated panels that reflect the corresponding funder, including the AHRC, BBSRC, EPSRC, ESRC, NERC and the NIHR. Furthermore, research grant applications to the MRC, certain NIHR streams, as well as

other non-Research Council funders are internally peer reviewed by the Biomedical and Clinical (B&C) Committee. UEA's training grant applications are also peer reviewed. Designed to help improve the quality of funding applications, these reviews provide opportunities to raise questions and advise on research integrity. UEA researchers may require access to an external website, for legitimate research purposes, that has been blocked by either the Counter-Terrorism Internet Referral Unit (CTIRU), or the Internet Watch Foundation (IWF). In support of the University's *Internet Monitoring and Filtering Policy*, the University's ethics review process plays a key role in researchers seeking permission to access these websites for their research projects.

UEA's online learning platform, Blackboard, is used by several Schools to create dedicated Research Ethics pages. These not only provide information on research ethics and use of Ethics Monitor, but also provide links to RIN's portal pages to help staff and students navigate to the University's Research Integrity policies, procedures and guidelines.

All S-RECs have their own pages on the University's portal. These portal pages provide information on the ethics review process for each S-REC as well as guidance and contact information. They link to RIN's Research Integrity and Ethics portal pages and *vice versa*, as well as to the webpages and resources of professional bodies, including the BMC, NMC, Allied Health Professionals, Royal College of Nursing.

Course handbooks are produced by multiple Schools, providing course information, including UEA research ethics processes. Specific ethics handbooks have also been designed by some Schools, providing examples of best practice. Some S-RECs also produce FAQs and guidance regarding ethics review to assist with common queries and issues relating to the process at UEA, including providing drop-in sessions. Some Schools also use a collaborative approach to producing and sharing participant information and recruitment documents as part of their research and research integrity activity. Online handbooks and documents for staff are also used as signposting tools to UEA's Research Integrity policies, procedures and guidelines. Resources are continuously being developed to assist with the UEA ethics review process, including guided walkthrough documents for dissertation projects and flow diagrams advising on ethics approval requirements for projects.

The S-RECs continue to review and update their teaching of research integrity and ethics. Depending on the Faculty, some S-REC Chairs provide training sessions across all the Schools overseen by their S-REC, in order to standardise the training offered and to avoid conflicting advice between Schools. Most S-RECs recruit at least one external Lay Member to their Committee membership to provide independent advice. Membership is continually reviewed with some S-RECs increasing their numbers of members and the staff supporting the Committee. The S-RECs also continually review and work towards improving their visibility, and the awareness of research integrity and ethics within the University. They raise these topics at School meetings to ensure increased exposure to the wider staff and student bodies at UEA. The S-REC Chairs maintain regular contact with the other S-REC members to discuss developments and information relating to research integrity and ethics.

This Report was received by the Council of the University of East Anglia on 26th November 2025.

The UREC Chair is easily accessible to provide guidance and advice to S-REC Chairs/Members, researchers and others within the University about issues relating to research ethics and integrity.

Communications and Engagement

The *Concordat to Support Research Integrity* was originally published in 2012 and first updated in 2019 in relation to recommendations of the Science and Technology Committee's Report on Research Integrity, published in July 2018. The Concordat was reissued in April 2025 following a scheduled 5-year review in 2024 to ensure that it:

- remains relevant in light of recent developments in research nationally and internationally, including technological advances.
- remains appropriately aligned with international frameworks for research governance to support research carried out in international contexts.
- is as useful and practical as possible.

Since its publication, the University has been addressing the requirements of the updated and strengthened Concordat, for example whilst revising the University's *Guidelines on Good Research Practice in Research*.

Raising awareness of research ethics issues has been identified as a priority by the PVC R&I, the UREC Chair, the Head of Research Services, and the Research Integrity Manager. It is essential that the information reaches all staff and students to raise awareness of the University's requirements for ethics review. The S-REC Chairs take responsibility to cascade information to their relevant Schools. To assist this, UREC has a MS Teams Group to enable communication between the UREC Chair, the UREC Secretary, the S-REC Chairs and the S-REC Deputy Chairs on best practice, challenges, FAQs etc outside of the three formal UREC meetings per year. In 24/25, the UREC Chair created a repository on the UREC Teams Channel to capture examples of the different approaches used in the University to recruit participants for sharing across the S-RECs. The UREC Chair provided a novel example of a Story Book approach to inform very young children.

To raise the profile of S-RECs in the Schools, the UREC Chair has explored with the ADRs, the consistent inclusion of S-REC Chairs in School/Faculty research meetings. The current involvement of S-REC Chairs in UEA bodies varies across the Schools. This can range from sitting on School Boards to acting as a Deputy Chair on a Research Executive. Depending on the School, S-REC Chairs and other S-REC members may lead and contribute to research integrity and ethics discussions at School meetings, whilst others are afforded regular agenda items at School/Faculty Research Executive meetings. Information discussed at these meetings is usually cascaded throughout the Schools to ensure that important developments are regularly communicated to staff and students. The School's Research Director may also take the role of Deputy Chair on the S-REC.

The University's digital signage and e-bulletins are also used by RIN to remind staff and students to seek ethics review of their relevant work/study at the start of each academic year. This

approach is repeated in the early part of the spring semester particularly to provide a reminder for students doing their projects over the summer.

Regular email reminders at the start of the academic year and each semester are sent out by Schools to reiterate the importance and necessity of ethics review for studies. These emails also provide information on UEA's ethics review processes and links to relevant information. Staff, including supervisors, are also encouraged to remind students about UEA's ethics research processes, especially in relation to their dissertation projects.

The various teams of People and Culture Division (PCD) will engage with stakeholders when messaging and providing updates, guidance and training about a range of people policies and activities, such as policy updates, wellbeing, appraisal, performance management, etc. This may take the form of emails, presentations at meetings, workshops and training.

UEA is a member of the Eastern Academic Research Consortium (Eastern Arc), alongside the University of Essex, the University of Kent, and the University of Sussex. Since the initiative began, UEA has led a small cross institutional network of Research Integrity Managers from the Eastern Arc and more recently also from the University of Arts London to share good practice and experiences in research integrity. The topics discussed in the bi-monthly meetings in 24/25 have included: investigating research misconduct allegations; online ethics review systems; ethics review of engagement activities; and research in countries with geopolitical tensions.

The University encourages all researchers to make research data available to use by others, and particularly supports open research data wherever this is possible to do so in an ethical and responsible manner. The University supports the *Concordat on Open Research Data*, and its policy on Research Data Management is commensurate with the goals of this Concordat.

As part of the University's ongoing commitment to support open research, the PVC R&I has appointed a UK Reproducibility Network (UKRN) Institutional Lead to support robust and transparent research at UEA, promote awareness and adoption of best open research practices, and training and development activities to contribute to research reproducibility and replicability. Also, the University's Open Research Team organises a programme of events to mark International Open Access Week each year.

Significant work takes place to maintain RIN's Research Integrity and Ethics portal (internal) pages, which are also used to signpost researchers better to key information provided/decisions taken elsewhere in the University relating to research integrity and ethics. For example, to clarify the UEA approved software to create transcripts as provided by the Information Compliance Team, and the details of the University's three pre-approved online survey platforms provided by the Business Intelligence Unit. The University's external Research Integrity webpages mirror these portal pages.

Culture, Development and Leadership

The University's values inform the application of the leadership at UEA to guide and facilitate researchers to maintain a high research standard at UEA. Within the University, it is the responsibility of the Vice-Chancellor, Pro-Vice-Chancellors, and Heads of Schools (or other

equivalent senior officer in non-School units) and their formal delegates to ensure that an environment is created which allows research to be conducted in accordance with good research practice.

The University's commitment and leadership in this area are specified in the University's *Guidelines on Good Practice in Research*, on the University's Research Integrity webpage and RIN's Research Integrity and Ethics portal pages, and publicised in School e-Bulletins/University e-Bulletins.

The institutional leadership at UEA is also at the forefront of promoting a positive research culture. Responsibility for maintaining the professional standards of research integrity at UEA rests with the PVC R&I, who is supported in this area by the UREC Chair, the UKRN Institutional Lead, and the Research Integrity Manager.

School and departmental heads, research team leaders and senior administrators lead by example in promoting a positive research culture and researchers follow this lead. The Schools and PCD work together to discuss matters aligned to the Researcher Development Concordat and to Athena Swan.

The PVC R&I established a Research Culture Group in 2023 to ensure that priorities for research culture are an explicit part of UEA's research and innovation strategy. In May 2024, the University launched its Research and Innovation Strategy 2024-30 with a specific priority to address research culture. The Faculties and Schools are developing their visions for research culture at UEA and what they would like to achieve drawing upon the University's Strategy.

The Research Culture Group's priority areas in line with the University's R&I Strategy's Aim 1. "to extend our research and innovation base" are:
- Equality, Diversity, and Inclusivity (EDI)
- Research Integrity
- Open Research
- Research Ethics
- Researcher Development
- Collaborative Research Environment

The Group is chaired by the PVC R&I and includes the UREC Chair, the Faculty of Social Sciences ADR, the UKRN Institutional Lead, the Associate Director of Research and Innovation Services for Research, the Research Integrity Manager, the Open Access and Research Data Officer, the Library Director, the Open Research Librarian, the Head of Open Research, the Associate PVC for UEA Doctoral College, an ED&I representative, a representative from the PCD, and a PGR representative. The Research Culture Group have produced a Timeline on its external webpages to capture the University's progress in developing a positive research culture. The University considers Case Studies to be beneficial to provide valuable insights into best practices and have developed several short Case Studies based on real-life experiences, which illustrate ethics issues and promote good research practices to help other researchers or members of the S-RECs. These and Case Studies on open research practices are available also on the UEA's

This Report was received by the Council of the University of East Anglia on 26th November 2025.

Research Culture webpage: https://www.uea.ac.uk/web/research/research-culture-uea and listed in the 'Case Study on Good Practices' section below.

As well as promoting awareness of research integrity, UEA has developed education and training to strengthen a researcher's understanding of research integrity issues.

Emphasis is placed on the importance of research integrity and ethics throughout the whole process of project and research design. Ethics applications are rigorously processed and the benefits to improving the quality of research are highlighted to staff and students, including the expected rigour of peer review and publishing. For courses offering professional qualifications, focus is placed on the transferability and applicability of academic skills into a profession and the need for due consideration to ethics and integrity throughout a professional career. For researchers, research integrity and ethics is also an important aspect and expectation of their profession. When applying for funding and submitting papers for publication, it is expected that the integrity and ethics of a project has been carefully considered in the research design. Journal publishers frequently require evidence of ethics approval, and emphasis is also placed on the reproducibility of results. Researchers are therefore made aware of the importance of providing journals with data and codes. Whilst publication in a prestigious journal is considered a significant achievement, awards are also offered in some Schools for the publishing of high-quality research papers.

New staff and students receive Induction training, which may refer to research integrity and ethics. The University also has its own e-Learning Module on 'Research Integrity and Ethics' for staff across all disciplines and services. The course was developed by the UREC Chair and UEA colleagues: Research Integrity Team, Learning Technologists and the Digital Learning Team. The course is mandatory for all new academic staff and technicians, and ethics reviewers. Existing UEA academic staff and technicians are encouraged to complete this course as it provides a valuable refresher and Research Integrity training is now a mandatory requirement for receipt of grant funding from many funders. Students can also access the course to compliment the University's training already available in this area. The course provides a foundational understanding of research integrity and ethics to complement the established specialised training in the Schools and the bespoke training provided by RIN to Faculties/Schools/Committees/individuals. Refresher training is undertaken every three years.

The main ethics training is currently delivered through bespoke School-level training, and the Research Skills and Methods training delivered by the Schools. This training is tailored to the researcher's career stage and discipline. Training includes the knowledge and skills researchers need to have to assist on the following issues to ensure their research has integrity throughout the entire project lifecycle:
- study design and research rigour and reliability;
- consideration of ethics issues;
- data collection, management, sharing and storage;
- statistical methods; and,
- good practice in disseminating research to support an accurate and complete research record.

This Report was received by the Council of the University of East Anglia on 26th November 2025.

School-level training on research integrity is offered to staff and students at UEA in multiple ways, depending on the needs and requirements of each School. Undergraduate (UG) student training is typically incorporated into teaching modules, with several courses offering dedicated modules on research methods that incorporate topics such as study design, statistical methods, replication procedures and ethics. Permission is also sought from students to use their projects as examples of best ethics practices when providing advice to students in subsequent years. Summer Schools have previously been offered to both UEA and external students, providing teaching on best practices for the translation of an experimental design through to its implementation. Ethics and research methods training is also incorporated into dissertation modules for many courses, and much effort is made to pair UGs with supervisors having the relevant expertise for their planned dissertation topic.

Postgraduate taught (PGT) students continue to receive training through dedicated modules and/or workshops on research skills and methods. In other Schools, regular seminar series are offered to students, with sessions occurring regularly on a fortnightly basis. These series may offer general training, including an introduction to research ethics, or they may provide more dedicated teaching on research methods, depending on the course. In one School, the S-REC Chair provides a lecture on ethics and Ethics Monitor to third-year UGs and PGTs at the start of their dissertation preparation. Schools may also make use of the UEA Internships Scheme to give important research experience opportunities to final year UGs and PGTs.

All Doctoral Training Pathway students must undertake mandatory ethics training in order to pass their probationary period. This is delivered by the relevant Faculty/Partnership Training Pathway Lead, or by an external provider if the research involves procedures on live animals. In some Schools, their S-REC Chair and Deputy Chair undertake teaching and workshops on several doctoral programmes focusing on the work of the ethics review committee, research governance and research integrity. These sessions can be filmed and rewatched by participants and accessed as part of the resources for the relevant course. Postgraduate research (PGR) students may also receive a training session on the preparation of their ethics application as part of their regular training and support programme. PGR students are also given opportunities to attend ethics workshops that include elements of role play, with scenarios aligning to the type of project undertaken at a PGR level. Other School-specific initiatives are also available to students, including monthly ethics training sessions, and ethics drop-in sessions, for example, may be hosted by the PGR Director. PGRs typically receive advice and training throughout their research project, whilst Schools offering professional doctorates provide training through dedicated modules or course components on research methods and research dissemination.

Ethics training sessions on the use of Ethics Monitor are delivered by the S-REC Chairs to staff in their respective Schools, and new specific School level guidance documents have also been introduced. Some Schools hold drop-in ethics sessions for staff.

Upon starting at UEA, new academic staff receive an induction, providing an opportunity to discuss the various procedures within their School, including the ethics review processes. These inductions may also be complemented with seminars and workshops, as well as annual training sessions on several topics including research, teaching, integrity and ethics, depending on the

School. One School, for example, incorporates UEA research ethics practices and policies into their Accelerator Research Workshop Series for staff. This includes workshops on generative artificial (AI) intelligence and the UEA ethics review process.

All newly appointed members of staff with responsibility for supervision, and existing members of staff taking on their first supervisory role, are required to attend the appropriate programme of development for new supervisors. In order to continue supervising postgraduate researchers, experienced supervisors are expected to attend continuing professional development sessions in relation to their supervisory role every three years. Research integrity and ethics is touched upon in this general training. Further training sessions for supervisors to aid their support for undergraduate and postgraduate students undertaking an ethics review process are now available.

Upon commencement of employment, all staff are required to undergo mandatory EDI training 'Diversity in the Workplace', with subsequent refresher courses every two years. Staff engaged in recruitment also undergo recruitment and selection training every two years, incorporating elements of unconscious bias awareness. UEA staff and students have access to LinkedIn Learning, where a variety of wellbeing and EDI pathways 'Race in the Workplace' and 'Equality, Diversity and Inclusion' have been established.

There are a range of resources and opportunities to support managers and leaders at different stages in their career at UEA to manage and lead colleagues effectively. These resources complement the learning gained through on-the-job learning, practice, and shared experiences with others.

A wide range of additional learning, training and mentoring opportunities to support the development of researchers' skills throughout their careers are available, for example the University's Organisational Development Service (ODS) provides a wide range of professional learning and development opportunities to assist the professional development of researchers, including coaching and mentoring. LinkedIn Learning is available to all researchers at UEA and a content map relevant to research specific learning paths is available via the online UEA Research Advisory Forum. A targeted learning needs analysis for researchers is planned in the near future. Partnering with key stakeholders within research areas and RIN, the ODS and Professional Learning team will facilitate a review to strengthen and further embed learning and development practices for both transferable and peer-to-peer/job-specific needs. This will include supporting individuals, teams, line managers and supervisors to utilise personal development plans and schedule meaningful development conversations through the appraisal cycle, and increase the visibility and utilisation of existing mechanisms to raise learning and development needs at any time to enable the identification and delivery of targeted interventions and solutions to meet core or emerging requirements.

There are specific PCD portal pages about support for research staff working at UEA providing a Code of Practice for the Management of Research Staff and Guidance on Appraisals for Researchers, designated research staff Coordinators in each School, and Guidelines for Research Managers, and other relevant information.

UEA utilises both mentoring and 'Buddy' systems to ensure staff and students are provided with formal and informal routes for seeking academic advice and support. The buddy system is designed to strengthen and improve the connections between education-focussed staff and research-focussed staff and PGRs. A supervisor of a PGT student may be allocated a Buddy to assist them to support the student through their dissertation project. These Buddies may also be a member of one of the S-RECs, assisting supervisors to support their students' ethics applications and providing guidance for the supervisor.

The University recognises the importance of addressing mental health issues and strives to create a supportive research environment. UEA has a Wellbeing team as well as a range of toolkits, guidance and systems in place via the PCD portal pages, including an Employee Wellbeing Toolkit, Mental Health Awareness support signposting, Wellbeing Ambassador Network; Employee Assistance Programme and a wide range of activities that support national mental health wellbeing initiatives such as Mental Health Awareness Week, Men's Health and similar. Some managers also benefit from Mental Health First Aid Training and, where the role requires, more specialist interventions.

Staff are also allocated a Line Manager and Mentor upon joining their School at UEA. Mentors are assigned to new staff members based on the latter's contract type (research/teaching) and specialism, in order to provide support that is specific to the needs of the individual. Mentees requiring ethics knowledge in a certain area are also likely to be matched with mentors possessing the required ethics expertise in that specialism. The Eastern Arc runs a Mentoring Scheme, matching mentors and mentees across the partnering institutions. This offers non-hierarchical, professional support outside of the institutional, managerial and reporting structures that might be found within the mentoring programmes of a single university. It also provides opportunities to gain new perspectives on behalf of the mentor and mentee, including insights into the practices of other institutions and professionals.

As part of the University's Research Activity Planning (RAP) annual exercise, researchers undertake regular meetings with their Directors of Research and/or Heads of School to discuss their projects and this involves discussions and raising awareness of the ethical considerations for their studies. Funds may also be provided to research staff members to attend conferences and external training in research skills. Some Schools also utilise Time and Motion audits to evaluate the amount of time devoted to training and to aid in the provision of time and space afforded to researchers to learn and develop.

In the case of students, supervisors provide a first point of call for queries relating to research integrity and ethics. If additional advice is required, students are encouraged to contact the relevant S-REC, either directly or through their supervisor. Schools also operate a system of Peer Assisted Learning (PAL), whereby final year undergraduate students provide support and advice to undergraduates in their first and second years at UEA. Postgraduate students also provide support to undergraduates as part of this system. Some Schools aim to provide spaces and opportunities for students to come together and discuss their work with other students. The University's Learning Enhancement team may also be involved, giving students the opportunity to seek further advice.

Some Schools hold regular Research Forums, providing opportunities for staff and postgraduate students to discuss specific projects and the ways in which they are managed, including sharing knowledge of research methods and ethics considerations. These Forums are an open space to build people's understanding of good research practices. Staff from RIN are also invited to contribute to these discussions. Schools are also introducing new initiatives, for example, the introduction of a 'Research Exercise Framework (REF2029) Environment Action Plan' in one School, includes plans to promote the School's research culture. This will include areas such as mentoring, research dissemination and support for writing grant applications. Research Culture seminars have also been launched that encourage the presentation of research projects by undergraduate students, postgraduate taught students and Early Career Researchers; postgraduate research students already have opportunities to do this.

Whilst the University provides guidelines on best research practices at an institutional level, it also encourages the adaptation of specific guidance at a Faculty and School level to better reflect the needs of a School or specific area of study, and to help develop their specific best research practices. These may also be combined with guidance and information from professional bodies. Research Team Leaders undertake regular meetings with their Research Groups to discuss best research practices with regards to their particular research. Team Leaders also invest considerable time in discussing experimental design with Postdoctoral Research Associates (PDRAs). Line Managers may also be involved in the practical planning stages of projects for research staff starting their first research projects. Local guidance designed to assist with raising awareness and promoting academic research has also been reintroduced in the form of 'Research Dissemination' policy briefs.

Collaboration across Schools and Faculties, as well as with external institutions, is encouraged, providing opportunities for discussions on best research practices. Students can engage across multiple disciplines and experience different research practices through involvement in larger collaborative projects at the University. The EDESIA: Plants, Food and Health PhD Programme at UEA, for example, provides PGRs with access to a wide range of expertise and facilities in plant-based food and health across the University and the wider Norwich Research Park before deciding on a specialism in their second year of research.

Self-reflection also forms an important aspect of research culture and is emphasised in the research methods training and ethics review processes. Questions included on the University ethics application form also assist with this process of self-reflection and the importance of the research to be undertaken, for example the form asks, 'What impact will the research have?'.

Monitoring and Reporting

The minimum requirements of the Concordat: producing an annual report on research integrity and having named primary contacts for research integrity on the University's website, have been in place at UEA for a number of years.

Alongside UREC, the University with the Norfolk and Norwich University Hospital (NNUH) Trust operate a Joint Research Governance Committee and Joint Research Governance Operations

Group overseeing healthcare research within the NNUH Trust and the UEA, under the HRA Framework.

Schools at UEA use several methods to ensure that research is conducted in accordance with standards of best research practice and integrity. For staff, such topics are embedded within induction sessions and training received within the School, whilst appraisal meetings also provide ongoing opportunities to monitor and discuss methods of best research practice and integrity. Depending on the School, there may also be a reporting mechanism to the Director of Research relating to activities being undertaken as part of an individual's research.

For students, these principles are heavily embedded in relevant modules, notably those containing a research component, such as dissertation modules. This can also be monitored using the Module Level ethics approval process, allowing the relevant S-RECs to assess the type of project being undertaken by students in a particular module. A new procedure is also being considered in one School in regard to best research practice. This includes a proposal for all taught student project data to be stored in a central location, giving supervisors access to this data and to ensure consistency in this approach across all the student projects in that School. Clear guidance on the reporting of adverse events has also been developed by one School to assist with this process and emphasis has also been placed on the necessity for risk assessments.

The Schools at UEA also provide several informal channels to assist individuals who may wish to raise concerns regarding research integrity and its implementation at the University. These may exist as part of the UEA Supervisor and Mentor pathways for students and staff respectively, as well as discussion opportunities with Line Managers, Heads of Schools and Directors of Research, depending on the School's approach. S-REC Chairs are also readily accessible, as are other S-REC members for those S-RECs representing a Faculty. Consideration is also being given to the creation of 'safe spaces' within some Schools to help encourage discussions around research integrity without the fear of recriminations for staff and students.

Opportunities to provide feedback on the School's research environment are provided in several ways: 'Research Away Days' incorporate discussions on undertaking research and include consideration of research integrity and ethics. Regular discussions take place across the Schools, including informal research meetings, School monthly meetings, Research Group meetings and Executive Meetings. In some instances, representatives for undergraduate and postgraduate research are invited to attend the latter, allowing for information to be disseminated to the wider student body. Students are also offered opportunities to provide feedback in the form of surveys.

PGRs can feedback on their research environment through the biannual Postgraduate Research Experience Survey (PRES). The PRES 2025 ran from 10th February to 28th April 2025 and included questions on PGRs' experiences of research community.

The University's all-staff Pulse Survey was launched in December 2021, it had been circulated on a quarterly basis but is currently under review. The Survey aimed to give a regular check on how staff are feeling about work life and wellbeing at UEA so that the University could

This Report was received by the Council of the University of East Anglia on 26th November 2025.

continually monitor what is going well and where there can be improvements. A monthly Pulse Survey is circulated to PGRs.

Each year Senate gives assurances to Council on the activities undertaken to support and strengthen understanding and application of research integrity issues across the University.

Changes and developments during the period under review

The *Concordat to Support Research Integrity* is the UK's national framework for research integrity. It was first published in 2012 then revised in 2019 and has undergone an extensive review and sector-wide consultation led by the Research Integrity Concordat Signatories (RICS) Group. The UREC Chair and Research Integrity Manager were invited to a Consultation Workshop on 11th October 2024 with other stakeholders from across the research community to test and refine suggested changes to the Concordat that had been received in the online survey responses, to help further shape the revisions and make sure the Concordat remains fit for purpose. An updated version of the Concordat was published on 4th April 2025, which is accessible via the new host website of the UK Committee on Research Integrity (UKCORI). Work has begun within the University to consider and implement the changes. Updates have been made already to UEA's online training module on 'Research Integrity and Ethics'. Staff and PGRs had been informed of the revised Concordat by the PVC R&I in his April Research and Innovation Update. The revised Concordat will be an item on the October UREC agenda.

In mid-August 2024, following the UKCORI Stakeholder Workshop series, which UEA took part in, to advance the discussions about research integrity indicators in five domains: Strategy; Leadership; Procedures; Practices; and Skills, UKCORI released its Report on Indicators of Research Integrity. The Report provides a shortlist of 16 potential indicators identified as most important for HEIs to consider using to understand the status and trajectory of the conditions that support research integrity. UREC has initiated work on these research integrity indicators to monitor and develop research integrity within UEA, including the addition of six risk entries in the area of Research Integrity and Ethics to the RID Operational Risk Register. Discussions with the University Safety Services on the risks in this area have concluded with entry SRR-UEA-008 (Failure to Maximise Research Quality and Power) on the University Strategic Risk Register referring to maintaining high standards of research integrity and ethics.

14 online Sector PCE Workshops were commissioned by Research England in May-October 2024 to co-develop indicators on research culture and environment for REF2029. UEA took part in two of these workshops: the University's Research Integrity team was represented at the workshop held on 6th September 2024, which focused on exploring assessment options and test indicators relating to research integrity and research processes and practices at both institutional and disciplinary levels. The University has identified a PCE Champion for each Unit of Assessment in REF2029 and has also created five PCE Groups focusing on:

- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

- Research Integrity, Research Ethics, and Environmental Sustainability
- Open Research
- Research Development and Staff Support
- Collaborative Research Environment

These Groups are populated mainly with the PCE Champions and members of UEA's Research Culture Group and provide a new structured governance approach for the University's PCE element of REF2029. Meetings of these Groups began in March 2025 and will continue through to the completion of the PCE component in UEA's REF2029 submission.

The University's research integrity policies, procedures and guidelines are subject to scheduled reviews every three years. UREC has been given responsibility to comment on and approve those under review before being further approved by the University Research Executive and endorsed by Senate. During the year, the following reviews have been initiated and approved by UREC:

- Guidelines on Good Practice in Research (last approved by Senate in November 2022).
- *Open Access Policy* (last approved by Senate in November 2022).
- *Research Data Management Policy* (last approved by Senate in November 2022).

The *Guidelines on Good Practice in Research,* and the *Research Data Management Policy* were approved also by the University Research Executive on 11th June 2025 and endorsed by Senate on 18th June 2025. Senate endorsement of the *Open Access Policy* was expedited to an earlier meeting on 7th May 2025 to enable a new institutionally-backed rights retention option therein to be implemented immediately.

In between the scheduled reviews of the University's research integrity policies, procedures and guidelines, the University undertakes continuous improvement in relation to this documentation and in May 2025, UREC approved minor updates to the University's *Research Ethics Policy*.

To complement the University's *Research Ethics Policy*, the University has over 30 Ethics Guidance Notes issued by the University Research Ethics Committee. This year three have been updated and two new ones have been created as detailed below.

UREC has revised the *Ethics Guidance Note* on 'Research in Other Countries and Research with Partners in Other Countries' to acknowledge that different forms of consent and different processes for obtaining and/or evidencing informed consent can be explored for culturally sensitive studies and should be discussed as part of preparing an ethics application.

The *Ethics Guidance Note* on 'Research Involving Secondary Data' has been updated by UREC to provide further clarification and to include examples using actual queries on secondary datasets that had been raised, for example information from Hansard; data published in newspapers; and data held in repositories such as Kaggle and GitHub.

The DPO led the review of the *Ethics Guidance Note* on the 'Management of Personal Data' by UREC to ensure it was up to date.

New University Ethics Guidance Notes can be suggested at any time, and the most appropriate author in the University will be approached to take it forward. Two new University Ethics Guidance Notes were created in 24/25:

In response to some researchers not understanding what debriefing means or the importance of it to show care towards research participants where their involvement in the research could potentially have caused them distress, UREC has created an *Ethics Guidance Note* on 'Debriefing Participants' and a Template for a Participant Debrief Sheet.

A UEA *Ethics Guidance Note* on 'Patient and Public Involvement (PPI) in Research' has been created to clarify when UEA ethics approval is required or not for PPI in research. This involved a dialogue with the Director of the Citizens Academy, based in the Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences at UEA, and ensured a good balance between the PPI perspective and the University's ethics review requirements. An amendment was made subsequently to the University's *Ethics Guidance Note* on 'NHS Health and Social Care Research' and to the University's *Ethics Guidance Note* on 'Ethics Approval for Workshops' to ensure consistent guidance for ethics review requirements and PPI in research, including workshops held as part of PPI.

Generative AI is a fast-emerging technology and UEA's *Generative AI Policy for Research and Innovation* was implemented on 1st March 2024 as a 'living' Policy in order to keep pace with the rapid changes in this area. This approach was key to UEA having a Policy in place as soon as possible, and setting the standards ahead of other HEIs, that focused on key business objectives and risks, and ensured that UEA's research and innovation could be conducted according to appropriate legal, ethical and professional frameworks, regulations, obligations, and standards. It also met our compliance with the <u>Concordat to Support Research Integrity</u> that the University is a signatory of. It was clear from the outset of implementing the Policy, that as the University's expertise and knowledge developed in this area, we would look to streamlining our governance and ethics processes associated with the use of generative AI tools in research and innovation, and to ensure that they are achievable in a timely manner with the resources available. In May 2025, UREC approved the process changes in the University's <u>Generative AI Policy for Research and Innovation</u>, as part of the University's ongoing 1-year scheduled review. The two main process changes were: (i) rebalancing the ethics review requirements in this area, and (ii) giving researchers more responsibility to consider the potential risks of using a generative AI tool in their research and how to mitigate against these, through a self-assessment approach. To do this, we created a new Self-Assessment Form to assist researchers. The processes in the Policy have been updated alongside the associated UEA documents:

- University's Research Ethics Policy (see above).
- University's *Ethics Guidance Note* on 'UEA Ethics Review of Research Involving Generative AI Tools'.
- Questions on the 'Generative AI' tab in the ethics application form in Ethics Monitor. Also, a 'Crib Sheet' was produced to assist the University's ethics reviewers to assess the answers to these revised questions.
- Flowchart outlining the University's key governance steps to approve an unsupported tool.

This Report was received by the Council of the University of East Anglia on 26th November 2025.

We note that the University's approach to exercise appropriate caution and adopt responsible practices when utilising generative AI tools is consistent with the UKCORI's Concordat to Support Research Integrity and Generative AI document (April 2025) that highlights the key considerations researchers should take into account regarding research integrity when using generative AI. This is also true of the UKRIO's Embracing AI with Integrity new guidance (June 2025) for researchers on the responsible use of AI in research. This guidance is part of UKRIO's priority workstream on AI and research integrity.

As the University is significantly more advanced in its approach than other universities in this area, we have supported other universities and the wider community, for example by UKRIO in June 2024 listing the University's *Generative AI Policy for Research and Innovation* in its 'AI in Research - Resources' and inviting UEA to present at the UKRIO Webinar addressing 'AI and Research: Supporting Research Integrity Through Governance and Ethics' on 9th October 2024. The Webinar was joined by over 550 attendees and material covered and questions asked during this Webinar have informed UKRIO's 2024/2025 priority workstream on the impact of AI on research integrity. Also, the University's Policy is referenced in the AI Topic in UKRIO's new online training course 'Introduction to Research Integrity' released on 21st May 2025. UEA was also asked to review this training material at the drafting stage and tested before going Live; UEA has been credited for this and having expertise in AI. UKRIO's new guidance Embracing AI with Integrity released on 27th June 2025 references the University's *Generative AI Policy for Research and Innovation*. UEA has also authored an article on 'Developing a Generative AI Policy for Research and Innovation at the University of East Anglia' for publication in THE Campus (Times Higher Education's peer-to-peer knowledge-sharing platform) on 8th October 2024. The University of Southampton also invited UEA to present on 'Maintaining Research Integrity When Using Generative-AI Tools in Research' at their inaugural event on Research Integrity to promote best practice at their institution, titled 'Embracing Research Integrity: Why it Matters', held on 23rd April 2025. UEA's work in this area is acknowledged in Bath Spa University's Guidance for Using Generative AI in Research (July 2025) and the contribution to this area by UEA has also been recognised by the new Eastern Arc Research Culture Group when discussing good practices emerging across the sector.

In August 2021, the University improved its research ethics practices through the implementation of a new online ethics review system, Ethics Monitor. The University has renewed its contract with the supplier, Cayuse, and continued to develop the system including implementing new reports for applications involving any generative AI tools, and any personal data not in the public domain. Also, the agility of the system has enabled the successful management of the user records in Ethics Monitor, as a requisite to the restructuring in 24/25 of the Professional Services in UEA. The University has submitted several product ideas to Cayuse's Connect Community on behalf of the University, for example, suggesting the creation and benefits of a Workload Report for the Peer Reviewers of ethics applications. Also, on behalf of all the Cayuse Ethics Monitor customers to develop the 'Task List' functionality in Ethics Monitor. The University has engaged with the quarterly Product Focus Group discussions with Cayuse regarding UEA's priorities on the Ethics Monitor 'Roadmap' for further product

development/enhancement. The University has updated its Ethics Monitor User Guides for Applicants, Supervisors, S-REC Reviewers, and S-REC Support Staff.

Over the 24/25 period, the S-RECs have continued to maintain their dedicated webpages and added new information as required, which has also improved compliance with the *Concordat on Openness on Animal Research in the UK*. Updated policies and guidance documents have been cascaded via the designated routes (e.g. administrative teams) and subsequently rolled out to student and staff cohorts. New members have also been appointed to several of the S-RECs, bringing fresh perspectives to the committees. Further support documents have been created to assist with the ethics review processes in some Schools. For example, a new risk assessment document has been created for use in one of the Schools, with a particular focus on research projects. A new review process has also been setup to assist this process. In the same School, a draft 'walkthrough' guide has also been created for undergraduate and postgraduate projects using secondary data.

The promotion and integration of ethics review processes have remained an important focus for the S-RECs, with several working towards a wider range of programmes to support staff and students in understanding and applying ethical principles more effectively. This has included tailored workshops, updated guidance materials, and drop-in sessions aimed at improving the quality of ethics applications and ensuring that ethical concerns are thoroughly addressed from the outset. New ethics modules have been created, for example "Using animal models in research" has been designed as a taught module for PhD students. One School has an Ethics Working Group, which has also considered further actions to support researchers' responsibilities for research integrity and ethics. Several outcomes from this Group's review have been trialled throughout the year with a view to increasing supervisor responsibility in the ethics process. Another School trialled the introduction of compulsory ethics approval for undergraduate student projects in 23/24. This initiative has been rolled out as a requirement to PGT students.

The Schools continue to raise visibility of ethics procedures. For example, ethics application submission dates and ethics updates are now a standing item on the weekly School Bulletin for one School. Another has facilitated a session with PGR students about research ethics. This combined information about the review process, with a reflective discussion of lived/situational ethics in student research. Similarly, other Schools have included insider/outsider perspectives on research as topics for their forums, to which all staff and PGR students are invited. UEA's Centre for Higher Education Research Practice Policy and Scholarship (CHERPPS) held an event on research ethics in pedagogical research, coordinated by UEA's Ethics Committee Chairs and Reviewers. The event was well-received and several insights from the event have been incorporated into general training on pedagogical research.

The new S-REC annual reporting that was introduced in 23/24 was received very favourably and considered to be very beneficial and has been repeated in 24/25 so that we can continue to share best practices/experiences across UEA's 10 S-RECs and to facilitate regular monitoring of the S-RECs to demonstrate the high quality and consistency of the work they are undertaking. The

This Report was received by the Council of the University of East Anglia on 26th November 2025.

UREC Chair and Research Integrity Manager also communicated this information in the new UREC Annual Report to Senate in February 2025. This Annual Report is intended to provide members of Senate with background and information about UREC, including its membership, responsibilities, and achievements. Links are also provided to signpost Senate to further resources on the University's portal and web pages, and on the websites of relevant external organisations.

The University's e-Learning Module on 'Research Integrity and Ethics', launched in May 2024, was originally developed for UEA staff, but access has since been requested for PGR, PGT and UG students. PGRs, like staff, can undertake the training via UEA LearnUpon, and the course has been made available on Blackboard for PGTs and UGs. In December 2024, RIN analysed the reviews provided by UEA Learners after completion of the training for UREC's consideration and it was noted that 90% of Learners had rated the course 5* and the comments that had been submitted were of a very positive nature. The course was updated in April 2025 to reflect the revised version of the *Concordat to Support Research Integrity* published that month.

Following a review of PGR supervisor training, from October 2024 core training for supervisors of postgraduate researchers includes two elements:

- A central online training module delivered through LearnUpon and developed by the UEA Doctoral College. This new module provides training around the regulations, student-supervisor relationship, and emerging guidance from the UKRI New Deal for Postgraduate Researchers and the UK Council for Graduate Education. This is mandatory training and will require successful completion every 3 years as outlined in the UEA Code of Practice for Research Degrees.

- Faculty-led training. This will deliver a more local best practice approach in-person and is mandatory for colleagues who have not supervised postgraduate research students at UEA previously. Faculty-led training will be optional for more experienced supervisors.

Staff regularly take part in external initiatives to ensure they have up-to-date knowledge of the frameworks, standards and obligations that apply to their work and areas of expertise, and take up opportunities to contribute and influence developments in external policy and strategy pertaining to research integrity. For example, UEA was invited in November 2024 by UKRIO to submit an EoI to be part of a new collaborative project commissioned by UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) that UKRIO are leading to promote good authorship practices in research as part of their 2024/2025 priority workstream on authorship disputes. The UREC Chair was selected to participate in this new peer-to-peer project and in March 2025 took part in a Workshop group discussion on how to resolve disputes about authoring practices and how to prevent issues arising initially by developing contracts of authorship at the earliest opportunities. This input will be used by UKRIO to develop a series of guidance notes about best practices looking at authorship, contributions and acknowledgments. The University is also considering producing guidance on authorship practices for its researchers, and the UKRIO guidance notes will assist UEA to do so. Also, in 24/25 RIN's Research Integrity team contributed to the:

- Research Culture Enablers Network (RECEN)

This Report was received by the Council of the University of East Anglia on 26th November 2025.

- Selected attendee at the Research England commissioned REF2029 PCE Thematic Workshop on 'Integrity and the Research Process in REF PCE'
- UKRIO Webinar on 'AI in Research: Supporting Research Integrity through Governance and Ethics'
- Invited attendee at the UKRI-led Consultation on the 5-year review of *Concordat to Support Research Integrity*
- UKRIO Webinar on 'Ethical Considerations in Research'
- Invited attendee at the Wesley Group Workshop on 'AI Ethics'
- REF2029 Town Hall on 'REF2029 People Culture and Environment Pilot'
- UKRIO Subscriber Symposium 2025 on 'Collaborating to Succeed in a Time of Uncertainty and Change in the Research Landscape'

In 24/25, the University's Research Culture Group began compiling a list of the University's training provision relating to research culture, which covers a wide range of topics that create a supportive environment and foster a positive culture at UEA where researchers thrive and develop in all aspects.

The UREC Chair attended a meeting on 26th September 2024 to convene a new Eastern Arc Research Culture Group to work more closely together across the Eastern Arc in developing a positive research culture. At subsequent meetings, discussions have taken place on how each university in the Eastern Arc approaches their development of research culture including: rewards and recognition strategies through promotion indicators; awards; profile development; PGR support, and other good practices emerging across the sector.

The University undertakes research, whether on its own or with third parties, that aligns with the principles of trusted research, for example protecting (i) intellectual property; (ii) sensitive research; and (iii) people and infrastructure, from potential theft, misuse and exploitation. A draft University Export Controls Policy is currently in preparation and is expected to be approved in 25/26. This Policy is to ensure the research activities of UEA staff and students remain in full compliance with the UK export controls that restrict the export of goods and/or technology, with the aim of preventing proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) and countering terrorism.

The University's Data Protection Officer updated the *Data Protection Policy* to redefine the University's position on who is the Data Controller for students' research activities. The Policy now states that UEA is the Data Controller when students are processing personal data involving living identifiable individuals in their research (PGRs) or in their research as part of their course/programme of study (UGs and PGTs), as they are doing so under the instruction and supervision of the University. The Information Management Board on 1 August 2024 approved the update, and this Policy and the Data Protection legislation now applies to these students.

A new University Data Protection Day was held in January 2025 and included a drop-in Q&A clinic on 'Research, Ethics and Data Protection' led by the UREC Chair and RIN's Research Manager Leads for University ethics and NHS ethics.

This Report was received by the Council of the University of East Anglia on 26th November 2025.

The University's externally facing Research Integrity webpages have been enhanced and now mirror the University's internal information, which is updated regularly on the Research Integrity and Ethics portal pages. The University has also updated the internal information on responsible engagement and impact beyond academic studies on its Impact portal pages.

The University holds an active Office for Human Research Protections (OHRP)-approved Federal Wide Assurance (FWA). This Assurance applies whenever the University becomes engaged in research on human subjects, conducted or supported by any US federal department or agency that has adopted the US Federal Policy for the Protection of Human Subjects. In March 2024, the expiration date of the FWA was extended to 7th March 2029.

Ongoing reviews of the Joint NNUH/UEA Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) continue, with the UEA review being undertaken by the most appropriate person(s). Additional SOPs have been introduced as required over the last year, as identified by both the NNUH and UEA teams.

RIN, working with UEA researchers, continues to respond to requests from the NIHR Research Delivery Network to assess whether UEA sponsored studies are recruiting participants to target through the 'Sponsor Engagement Tool'. This monitoring of NIHR funded studies is to ensure the delivery of high-quality research, for the benefit of patients, the public and health and care organisations across England.

Details of UEA Sponsored studies that have NHS ethics and/or HRA governance approvals are captured on Ethics Monitor, and using this information we are actively reviewing these studies on a regular basis to ensure that all regulatory requirements are adhered to.

Building on the strong foundations laid in previous years, UEA has made outstanding progress in open and responsible research during 24/25. Our work demonstrates growing engagement, sector leadership, and a clear optimism for the future of research culture at UEA. The University is a member of the UK Reproducibility Network (UKRN) and 2025 saw a transition in leadership, with Dr Philip Leftwich stepping into the UKRN Institutional Lead role, supported by the Open Research team based in the Library. The ReproducibiliTea series continues to thrive, now supported by a newly launched Open Research webpage from UEA's Library. This hub advertises upcoming workshops, hosts session recordings, publishes news, and features primers on open research best practice, many co-developed with UKRN.

The University's commitment to foster, develop, evaluate, and adopt the best reproducible research practices is demonstrated by UEA being a member of the UKRN Open Research Program (ORP), that is running until August 2026, as an unfunded institution and provides resourcing for the UKRN ORCA (Open Research Coordinator and Administrator) role supporting ORP activities. UEA was a key case contributor to the pilot phase of the UKRN Open and Responsible Researcher Reward and Recognition (OR4) Project within the ORP in 24/25, helping shape the newly published OR4 Toolkit. This vital resource is now guiding institutions across the UK in recognising and rewarding open research practices.

Following the publication of the inaugural national survey on open research launched in 2023, UEA has helped distribute the 2025 iteration, with participation expanding from 25 to over 100 researchers across more disciplines. This surge highlights the increasing prominence of open

research at UEA. Results, set for publication in late 2025, will provide valuable insights into institutional attitudes and enable benchmarking against other universities.

Having successfully completed the Open Science Train-the-Trainer programme (as detailed in the 23/24 Report), UEA is now moving beyond delivery at the institutional level. We are actively collaborating with UKRN to develop a new national curriculum for open research training. This initiative aims to raise standards across the sector, support positive engagement with REF PCE and empower researchers nationwide with best practice tools and knowledge.

In January 2025, the Open Research team in RIN moved into the Library, joining the existing Open Research Librarian. The team was further enlarged in May 2025 with a new Head of Open Research, as part of wider restructuring of what is now the Library and Learning Enhancement Division (LLE). Throughout 24/25, the Open Research team provided online and face-to-face UEA training on data management and archiving with particular focus on the digital aspects of this. Training is provided to new members of staff in RIN, in MED and to PGR students across the faculties as part of regular training events. Additional training is also provided on request.

The Open Research team also organised events to mark International Open Access Week from 21st to 27th October 2024. The theme for 2024 continued the call to put "Community over Commercialisation", which provided an excellent platform for highlighting the ongoing work in UEA that involve Citizen Science and other Open Scholarship activities. Some events were held jointly with the Library including those around relevant policy updates. UKRN events were also promoted during this week and the team also held a drop-in session for researchers to ask questions and discuss any aspect of Open Research.

ORCID provides researchers with a unique digital identifier to facilitate the correct attribution of research activities and outputs and so serves to improve the researcher's recognition and discoverability. UEA has ORCID Consortium membership to support UEA staff with creating ORCID IDs and with using ORCID across external and internal systems, such as Pure. This helps maintain complete and up-to-date publication records, and facilitates reporting in ResearchFish.

Rights' Retention provides a mechanism which allows authors to make their work immediately available through an open access repository, without the need to pay an Article Processing Charge (APC) and so provides a route to meeting open access requirements of the Wellcome Trust, UKRI, other funders and REF2029. Staff in RIN and the Library continued to work on a Rights Retention approach for UEA. Following extensive consultation and feedback, the final, approved approach works through an amendment to the University's Intellectual Property Regulations and its updated Open Access Policy (rather than as a separate Rights Retention Policy as had been originally planned). This new Policy approach comes into effect from 1st January 2026 and during 25/26 the LLE Open Research team will be conducting extensive communications internally at UEA to raise awareness of the Policy, and in particular how it will facilitate complying with the open access requirements of REF2029. The team will also contact key publishers during 2025 to let them know in advance of this policy change.

This Report was received by the Council of the University of East Anglia on 26th November 2025.

Work around Transitional Agreements (TAs) with publishers, which allow corresponding authors to make their work open access at no additional cost to the authors as well as covering 'read' access to subscription journal content, continues. These agreements are being negotiated by Jisc on behalf of the UK HEI sector. RIN and the Library have been working together closely to ensure that UEA provides input to Jisc on these deals, and to assess each deal on its benefit and relevance to needs of UEA researchers. Following challenging negotiations around an agreement with the American Chemical Society in 24/25, LLE has been preparing for negotiations for the "Big 5" publishers (Elsevier, Wiley, Springer Nature, Taylor and Francis, and SAGE); the current deals are all due to expire on 31st December 2025. LLE will be responding to national surveys on the agreements over July-August 2025.

UKRI has announced a draft research data policy. While many areas of the policy are still under development, UEA has responded to UKRI's call for feedback.

Reflections on progress and plans for future developments

Compliance with the *Concordat to Support Research Integrity* is a status that needs to be maintained within UEA, and this requires continued training and development of the University's staff and students. In doing so we will need to understand and continue applying the changes made in the refreshed Concordat following the 5-year review concluding in April 2025.

The national Research Integrity climate is building significant momentum. The UK Committee on Research Integrity (UKCORI) was formed in 2022, following a report by the House of Commons Science and Technology Committee in 2018 that recommended greater attention be given to research integrity. Research integrity and ethics, open research and other good research practices will be an aspect of higher education providers which will receive greater focus in the new PCE element of REF2029. The University will continue to work with the indicators provided by UKCORI to monitor and develop research integrity within UEA.

It is clear that as the national profile of research integrity is steadily rising, more resources will undoubtedly be required to be diverted to this area to attain, maintain and demonstrate the necessary compliance expected within Universities and for the preparation of REF2029. The S-REC Chairs take responsibility to cascade research integrity information to their relevant Schools from UREC. Ideally, this responsibility should be widened to enhance the progress in embedding good research practices across all Faculties at UEA. One Faculty within UEA is also planning a cross-programme working group to share best practices and address discipline-specific challenges in the ethics review. The same Faculty is also considering embedding 'Ethics Champions' in academic departments, designating staff members within each department to act as local points of contact for ethics queries and to promote good practice in research integrity. Another School plans to include a research integrity and/or ethics contribution to at least one School Forum next year as part of a wider discussion around participatory research, close to practice research, design research and action research, for example.

Other initiatives are also being considered. The Schools at UEA continue to consider improvements to the teaching and promotion of research integrity and ethics at the University. For example, an animal research module is planned to be deployed in multiple Schools. One Faculty is planning to expand student engagement initiatives to raise awareness of research integrity from the earliest stages of academic study. Plans also include the publication of quarterly newsletters and/or a blog series, providing regular updates, case studies, policy changes, and practical tips to keep the research community informed and engaged in ethical practice. The UREC Chair will address the achievements and developments reported annually by the S-RECs, and highlight key areas in the UREC Annual Report to Senate in February 2026.

In 25/26, the following scheduled reviews will be initiated by UREC and reviewed within the University:

- *Procedures for Dealing with Allegations of Misconduct in Research* (last approved by Senate in February 2023)
- *Policy for Approving the Integrity of UEA Research and Innovation Related Activities and Funding* (last approved by Senate in February 2023)

These documents will be submitted for approval by UREC and the University Research Executive in May and June 2026 respectively, and endorsement by Senate in June 2026.

A new University *Ethics Guidance Note* on 'Participant Recruitment via Social Media' is being developed to provide staff and students with support and guidance on the key ethical considerations when using social media to recruit research participants. Revisions will be made to the existing University *Ethics Guidance Notes* on 'Research Using Social Media (Parts A and B)' to ensure consistency.

Generative AI offers a wide range of potential uses, and researchers (staff and students) in exploring the benefits of this technology must continue to take full responsibility for the use of generative AI tools in their research, studies or work. Any data, information, or material they choose to input or enter into a generative AI tool, must be done so in a responsible, ethical, and legal way. The University's *Generative AI Policy for Research and Innovation* and the processes therein are not to restrict research or academic collaboration, but to assist researchers in exercising appropriate caution when planning to involve a generative AI tool in their research, especially as the University does not have a centrally approved generative AI tool that is officially recommended, supported, or for which staff training is provided. The Policy will be reviewed and updated annually to ensure it remains current and fit for purpose in light of the rapid developments in Generative AI technology.

As Ethics Monitor continues to evolve, the training videos and user guides for Applicants, Supervisors and Ethics Reviewers will require updating, and the S-REC Chairs will continue to work with supervisors to be more aware of their responsibilities in supporting their student's ethics applications. The system generated Participant Information Sheets (and Parental/Other Responsible Person equivalents) and Consent Forms (PIS/CF) will be reviewed to ensure that these documents contain all the information that must be provided under the UK GDPR when

collecting personal data from individuals, and are clearly and concisely worded. Developmental work will continue with the supplier to ensure the sustainability and integrity of the system.

The University's *Whistleblowing Policy* (officially known as Public Interest Disclosure) will be reviewed by PCD in discussion with the named contact for disclosures under the University's *Public Interest Disclosure Procedure for Staff to Raise Concerns about Malpractice.* RIN will also be involved in any revisions to ensure that these guidelines and procedures, and the University's *Procedures for Dealing with Allegations of Misconduct in Research* complement one another.

The University has specific guidance available for appraisals for researchers, although the process is one that is University wide. There is not presently any specific guidance within this that relates to research integrity or time required to perform research with integrity. The process is currently under review led by UEA's Reward and Career Enablement team within PCD. The University has included criteria in UEA's Academic Progressions Handbook to recognise the contribution made to a positive research culture at UEA and open research and these will also be reviewed in 25/26.

The Research Culture Group will be considering the introduction of a new category of awards to recognise exceptional contributions to UEA's research culture in 25/26 as part of the University's annual Innovation and Impact Awards, which currently celebrate the research and entrepreneurial spirit of UEA staff, students and graduates as well as the important collaborative work with our valued partners beyond the University.

The University will address having an equivalent of the Student Insight Review Group (SIRG), to review studies recruiting UEA staff to provide advice on whether these studies can go ahead, what promotional activity can be carried out and timing clashes with planned staff surveys that are already being run centrally.

UREC will continue promoting the University's Research Integrity and Ethics e-Learning Module to provide institutional level introductory training, and continue developing Ethics and Researcher Development Case Studies.

UEA now has the functionality to carry out end of reporting year audits in Ethics Monitor. This will allow checks on whether applicants are completing applications accurately and if reviews are being conducted according to the University's policies and procedures, and thus providing the University with opportunities to improve its processes.

The University's Information Compliance Team will be reviewing their processes for assessing UEA's research activities that are planning to process 'high risk' personal data and developing associated information on UEA's portal pages and training material. This is essential to support the University when it is deemed to be the Data Controller for research activities that are processing personal data.

UEA's open research achievements in 24/25 show a clear trajectory of growth, innovation, and sector influence. Our involvement in national projects, expansion of participation, and leadership in curriculum development all point to an optimistic future for open research at UEA. We remain committed to supporting our researchers, sharing expertise nationwide, and contributing to a positive, open research culture.

This Report was received by the Council of the University of East Anglia on 26th November 2025.

The LLE Open Research team will organise a programme of events to mark International Open Access Week 20-26 October 2025. The theme for 2025 is "Who Owns Our Knowledge?", which will provide an excellent platform for highlighting the ongoing work at UEA around its Rights Retention approach, and how this fits with open access policies of funders and REF2029.

LLE will continue to evaluate Jisc-negotiated TAs relating to open access publishing in journals. The national Jisc consultations on the "Big 5" negotiations (covering Elsevier, Wiley, Springer Nature, Taylor and Francis and SAGE) will conclude in 25/26, and the outcomes of these consultations and negotiations will impact UEA researchers in how they approach publishing journal articles with these publishers from January 2026. The University's Rights Retention approach will facilitate publishing in the authors' journal of choice, whatever the outcome.

The UKRI new research data management policy is planned to come into effect at some point in 2026, and the LLE Open Research team will be working to ensure that UEA's UKRI-funded researchers are aware of the Policy and have the support they need to comply. The team will also be making substantial review, changes, and updates to the Open Research webpages.

Case study on good practice

The University Research Ethics Committee (UREC) agreed that it would be very beneficial to have short Case Studies based on real-life experiences, which illustrate ethics issues and promote good research practices to help other researchers or members of the S-RECs. UEA has developed three such Case Studies:

- Shaping the UEA's Civic University Project through the UREC Ethics Review
- Supervisor Mentoring by the School of Education and Lifelong Learning's Ethics Review Committee
- The UNESCO Chair Programme and Researcher Development

These are available on the UEA's Research Culture webpage: https://www.uea.ac.uk/web/research/research-culture-uea and supplement the Open Research Case Studies addressing good open research practises used in research on:

- Microfinance Misconceptions
- Brain Evolution
- A Royal Shipwreck

This Report was received by the Council of the University of East Anglia on 26th November 2025.

Section 3: Addressing research misconduct

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

Within the University, responsibility for ensuring that no misconduct occurs rests primarily with individual researchers.

The University's *Procedures for Dealing with Allegations of Misconduct in Research* outline the timely and robust actions undertaken when any allegation of research misconduct is brought against any present or past member of staff of the University in respect of research undertaken while employed by the University and/or while registered as a student at the University. Any allegations of misconduct in research against a present or past student while registered by the University are handled using the *Procedures for Investigating Allegations of Research Misconduct Made Against Students.* These Procedures are intended to provide reassurance that all allegations of research misconduct are treated seriously and fairly, and their merit investigated with integrity and with sensitivity.

The University's *Procedures for Dealing with Allegations of Misconduct in Research* are subject to a scheduled review every three years, but minor revisions can be made between reviews for example, following reflections on completed misconduct cases. The last scheduled review of the Procedures took place in 22/23 and the revised Procedures were approved by Senate in February 2023. The revisions made during the review are summarised on the front page of the Procedures, and include:
- strengthening the advice and guidance on taking informal steps initially.
- acknowledging the consequences of allegations made in bad faith.
- including the consequences of breaching confidentiality.
- clarifying the procedural stages and emphasising the prompt progression of the Procedures.

The next scheduled review of these Procedures will take place in 25/26.

All researchers are encouraged to report cases of suspected misconduct or malpractice and to do so in a responsible and appropriate manner in accordance with the University's Procedures.

Researchers must try to resolve the potential research misconduct matter they are concerned about informally before beginning the formal Procedures. In the first instance, an informal approach to the person concerned is encouraged and advice of the relevant Head of School or other equivalent senior office holder in non-School units sought. This is to ensure that wherever possible, issues are resolved without waiting for the formal process to be completed, and not to undermine the issue being raised. If an informal resolution cannot be achieved, any formal allegation is made following the University's Procedures above. Where misconduct or performance cannot be resolved informally, the HR Business Partnering (HRBP) team in PCD will be actively involved in advising on and supporting any formal process.

This Report was received by the Council of the University of East Anglia on 26th November 2025.

All allegations of misconduct in research are treated seriously and fairly and their merit investigated with integrity and with sensitivity. In all the University's enquiries following receipt by the relevant Head of School or equivalent, of an allegation of research misconduct and in any action taken as a result of their outcome, due regard is given to the need to:

- protect researchers against frivolous, vexatious, malicious or ill-founded allegations of misconduct in research. For example, any allegation found to be made to deliberately deceive will be treated as an act of dishonesty by the person making the allegation. The allegation may require immediate referral to the University's Staff or Student Disciplinary Procedures.
- protect the position and reputation of those alleged to have engaged in misconduct in research when such allegations are not confirmed. For example, if the case has received any publicity, the Respondent would be offered the possibility of an official statement released for internal and/or external purposes.
- protect the position and reputation of those who make allegations of misconduct in research in good faith, i.e. with the honest belief that misconduct in research may have occurred. For example, it is recognised that an allegation made in good faith should not be penalised and the Complainant might require support. The position and reputation of the Complainant will be preserved provided the allegation is considered to have been made in good faith.
- support those under investigation and observe the principles of natural justice. For example, all enquiries will be conducted on the basis of confidentiality to the strictest extent possible, and any breaches of confidentiality may lead to disciplinary action.

All enquiries are conducted on the basis of confidentiality to the strictest extent possible without compromising health and safety, or any issue related to the safety of the participants in any research, or the appropriate and thorough investigation of the allegation of research misconduct. The University throughout takes all reasonable measures to preserve the anonymity of the person making the allegation.

Named primary contacts to discuss issues relating to potential misconduct in research are on the University's portal pages and external website, and have been in place at UEA for a number of years. They are circulated in e-bulletins at the start of the academic year and during the academic year.

The HRBP team in PCD has awareness of a wide range of policies, both those owned by PCD (such as: Whistleblowing; and Dignity and Respect in the Workplace), and by other departments (such as: Safeguarding; Conflict of Interest; Research Misconduct; Financial Regulations; Conditions of Computer Use; Data Protection). When issues are raised which include a potential research integrity concern, the HRBP team member will carefully consider which policies might be relevant to the matter and ensure liaison with the appropriate UEA expert for further advice if required.

Each year Senate is asked to verify that the processes that are in place for dealing with allegations of misconduct in research are transparent, robust and fair and are appropriate for the University's needs, before giving assurances to Council. Cases are reviewed following their

completion and revisions to the University's *Procedures for Dealing with Allegations of Misconduct in Research* can be recommended. The very small number of allegations of research misconduct each year within the University means that it has not been possible to identify any trends.

In accordance with UKRI's *Policy on the Governance of Good Research Practice*, the University keeps the relevant Research Council(s) informed of all allegations of research misconduct at the stage that it is decided to undertake a formal investigation where it relates to an individual(s) associated with:

- a UKRI grant application under consideration.
- any directly or indirectly funded UKRI research activity.
- UKRI activity such as acting as an expert reviewer or strategic advisor (e.g. panel, committee, council member).

As UEA receives funding from Research England, information on all allegations referred for formal investigation are also given to Research England.

The University's *Procedures for Dealing with Allegations of Misconduct in Research* are followed for allegations of research misconduct received through the University's *Public Interest Disclosure (Whistleblowing) Policy*. The Procedures are analogous with the University's *Public Interest Disclosure (Whistleblowing) Policy*, tailored explicitly for research misconduct.

Workplace bullying and harassment of staff, students or any associated personnel by other staff, students or associated personnel are not tolerated by the University. Several funders have already made strong commitments to tackling bullying and harassment in the research and innovation sector, and RIN (in collaboration with PCD) has implemented procedures to address new clauses from some of the University's funders which deem researchers ineligible for funding if they have had claims of bullying or harassment upheld against them. The University is committed to maintaining a working and learning environment that is free from any form of harassment and bullying. The University's *Code of Practice for Staff: Dignity and Respect in the Workplace* sets out how the University intends to create an inclusive working environment and culture where staff are treated with dignity and respect and valued for their diversity. The University's values of Ambition, Collaboration, Empowerment and Respect support a 'no-blame' approach.

The University's 'Call It Out Bystander' Programme is available to address bullying, harassment, microaggressions, or other unacceptable behaviours, and submitting a report through 'Report & Support' enables access to various support systems.

Information on investigations of research misconduct that have been undertaken

During 24/25, there was one allegation of research misconduct received concerning a member of staff. The allegation was determined to be mistaken and the allegation dismissed. There were no allegations of research misconduct received against a student in respect of research

This Report was received by the Council of the University of East Anglia on 26th November 2025.

undertaken while registered with the University for a research degree of Doctor of Philosophy. There was one allegation of research misconduct received against a student in respect of their research component undertaken while registered with the University for a Masters Taught degree. This allegation was referred to the Senate Student Disciplinary Committee under General Regulations 14 and 15, where it was determined that there was evidence to support the allegation.

Out of the allegations of research misconduct received during 24/25, only one progressed to the formal investigation stage.

Type of allegation	Number of allegations	Number of formal investigations
Fabrication	0	0
Falsification	1	1
Plagiarism	0	0
Failure to meet legal, ethical and professional obligations	0	0
Misrepresentation (eg data; involvement; interests; qualification; and/or publication history)	1	0
Improper dealing with allegations of misconduct	0	0
Multiple areas of concern (when received in a single allegation)	0	0
Other	0	0
Total:	**2**	**1**