

ANNUAL STATEMENT ON RESEARCH INTEGRITY 2025-26

MIDDLESEX UNIVERSITY

Description of current systems and culture

The University was an early adopter of the Concordat to Support Research Integrity and continues to adhere to the principles and practices set out in that document. All staff and students engaged in research are required to conduct their activities in line with the Concordat, including any visitors who make use of, or are supported by, the University and/or its facilities. Staff are reminded of obligations in respect of research integrity at induction and on subsequent occasions. Concordat awareness, responsibilities and principles of research were delivered as a series of regular workshops by RKEO in 2024/25 and will continue through 2025/26. In May 2025 the University signed the Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers. We will conduct our gap analysis and develop an institutional action plan to build support for researchers to be published in May 2026, a working group with cross representation has been set up to enable this work. We shall strategically align all our activities to enable us to build support across career trajectories of all researchers across various career stages. The university is part of the London cluster of Early Career network supported by the British Academy. We continue to provide bespoke training and support on matters related to Research including security (FIRS), good governance of research practices (UK CORI), and closely follow guidance on international research collaborations from UK DSIT and through the National Security Act 2023. Our Code of Practice for Research remains aligned to UK Research Integrity Office.

Policies and systems

The University's [research and ethics policies](#) are overseen by the university Research and Knowledge Exchange Committee (RKEC) which reports to the University's Academic Board, which in turn reports to Governors. Policy development and enhancement is the result of periodic review, with regular field reviews of policies and their interaction. Faculties have their own RKECs which report to the university RKEC, and these are a key mechanism for distilling themes in the operation of policies related to research integrity and ethics and bringing them to attention.

The University's Registry manages processes for the reporting and investigation of allegations of research misconduct through a clear and well publicised [Policy and Procedures for Academic Integrity and Misconduct](#), which presumes and inculcates the positive virtue and value of academic integrity as a fundamental characteristic of an academic community rather than merely outlining the procedures and penalties for misconduct. Our approach to misconduct derives from a notion of 'positive integrity' – that is, the celebration and presentation of good practice as an essential characteristic of good academic practice. Investigations are coordinated by teams led by the Faculty Dean. Research students are also subject to the [University Code of Practice for Research](#).

Ethics committees at faculty and subject level report to a University Ethics Committee, which in turn reports to RKEC and Academic Board. Our ethics processes have been through a substantial period of review – both in relation to governance and operation. The former has been part of a baseline review of governance in relation to research and knowledge exchange; the latter the result of changes to the operation of ethical review via a new integrated ethics system associated with a new information system. The university [Ethics Framework](#) sets out guiding principles, expectations and the machinery for the operation of this policy. In 2025, we welcomed a new Chair of Research Ethics to the Research and Knowledge Exchange Office who oversees this aspect of Research Integrity. The university undertakes ethics training for all new staff when they join, training for PGRs on ethics is part of our Researcher Development programme and ethics of research are a key unit of our Researcher Training Programme.. Since October 2024 we have provided training in research ethics for all colleagues undertaking research, which is part of our RKEO based suite of research and knowledge exchange training programme that we run across the academic year annually. This is to provide a robust underpinning on key debates within research ethics which include but aren't limited to notions of equitability, inclusion and decolonised approaches to research.

Communications and engagement

Communications and engagement are essential to ensuring research integrity at the university. A regularly updated intranet site holds periodically reviewed and updated policy documents as well as guidance, procedure guides and an Academic Staff Handbook. Expectations with regard to research integrity and the ethical conduct of research are communicated on appointment through an induction process, through mentoring, training, and engagement with faculty and university committees. Student engagement with research integrity is achieved from induction and assignment briefing and then throughout the academic lifecycle. We promote staff/student awareness through workshops, documentation, briefings and resources, including integrating academic integrity within the student success essentials into Programme Induction activities. For staff we conduct regular briefings on the university's Regulations and Policies, supervision guidance, preparatory content in taught elements of research degrees as well as in taught research degrees. Undergraduate and graduate student tutorial and pastoral support provide a further opportunity to communicate the importance of these subjects. Further, university microsites (such as a popular channel on Research, Engagement and Impact, and the Viva Engage platforms periodically touch on issues related to research integrity in their discussion of research practice. In 2024 we also launched a regular newsletter from RKEO which lists current funding opportunities, training programme sessions every month, and is a showcase of new external funding successes for research and knowledge exchange. This newsletter has been in circulation for two years now, and it an essential communication tool for colleagues. In 2025 we also recorded and hosted a series of Research Podcasts which were designed, recorded and shared with the MDX community for encouraging debate and discussions about research and impact. The Middlesex University Research Podcasts are available from our website and Spotify.

Culture, Development And Leadership

The development of a culture of research integrity is led by a University Executive Team which places integrity at the heart of research practice. Our PVC (Research and Knowledge Exchange) leads assurance and governance through the mechanisms described above – for example, the PVC chairs the RKEC, and sets the framework for research governance in the university. Development of the framework for research integrity is led through RKEC, through the ethics committees and via a periodic review of all policies conducted by Academic Board. Reports on research, including research integrity, matters are made to the University Executive team and the Board of Governors periodically. The PVC is supported and assisted in ensuring fit-for-purpose governance of research integrity by faculty Deputy Deans (Research & KE) and by the Directors of Research, Knowledge Exchange and Post Graduate Research. Ethics committee chairs receive training and are involved at faculty and university level in the development of the landscape of research integrity. Our research culture is enhanced through a rich and diverse range of activities including lectures, workshops, training sessions, and access to multitude of regularly updates resources available on the intranet. In 2025 these were complimented by a series of research podcasts, newsletters from the RKE Office, inaugural lectures by professors and associate professors, as well as lead investigators of externally funded projects. In 2026 we will streamline our endeavours to find resonance and complementarity with our work on REF2029, for which as REF Manager has been appointed in Sept 2025. REF2029 governance frameworks and strategy are aligned closely to our principles and values of integrity in research

Monitoring and Reporting

Monitoring and reporting of student misconduct is undertaken by Registry, with a dedicated Academic Misconduct Team of considerable experience leading both the ‘positive integrity’ messaging discussed above and the enforcement action necessary to ensure compliance with the dictates of policy. Annual reporting on research integrity at university level is coordinated and routed through RKEC and onwards to Academic Board.

Changes and developments during the period under review

During the year under review the following developments were worthy of note:

1. The director of research completed the governance review of research, and related policies to enable updates and timely reviews of key documents, which shall be completed by July 2026.
2. The university’s new current research information system (CRIS), including the management of ethics cases went live after training for staff and students.
3. The University signed the Research Development Concordat and conducted a CEDAR survey in May 2025 to monitor the health of research across the institution. We shall conduct a gap analysis and publish our institutional action plan in 2026 academic year.

4. We undertook training for Faculties and other professional services members on UK DSIT's professional and regulatory standards on the Foreign Influence Registration Scheme (FIRS).

5. Preparations for REF2029 are underway with a new REF manager appointed and university governance structures for REF set up. The pause in the REF in 2025, allowed us to conduct a review of the changes to the institution since the last REF and take on board review and feedback from the REF2021 cycle.

6. We are part of the UK Committee on Research Integrity discussions on Guidance for use of Artificial Intelligence within Research.

Reflections on progress and plans for future developments

Progress has been considerable, not least because the governance review discussed has brought to light ways in which the design of mechanisms to assist with the maintenance of academic and research integrity can be improved. A review of policies with relevant updates, the capturing of progress within the CRIS modules, of which the repository module is now live and public facing. Cross referenced underpinning work on data systems and open access, as UKRI brings out new updated policies, has made progress. Future developments include a large portfolio of training to continue to be rolled out across 2026 for research and knowledge exchange with the intent of providing up-to-date, easy to access, regular training sessions to all members of staff and students. The university also plans to activate a roadmap of research impact that enables a thriving programme of engagement and dissemination activities for internal and external audiences in line with our 2031 Strategy. We welcome the launch of the research on our new external website <https://www.mdx.ac.uk/research/> which showcases the depth and breadth of excellence in our research.

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

The policy architecture of the university is set out on the university website and relevant policies are also mirrored within the intranet. The University continues to maintain and deliver the Research Development Programme a comprehensive training package for research students. For postgraduate researchers, research ethics and Integrity are covered both in the research induction course ("Kickstarting series") and in regular researcher development sessions focussing on 'Planning and organising research', 'Being a resilient researcher', 'Ethics', 'University processes and research', 'Working across Boundaries: Multi and Trans Disciplinary research', and 'Research integrity in practice'. Postgraduate researchers are also invited to use the app Dilemma, which gamifies engagement with research ethics issues. At both University and Departmental level staff and students are trained in the use of Ethics Monitor on the CRIS system, through which ethical approval for research projects is submitted.

Courses for academic staff covering research integrity include ‘Managing externally funded research’, ‘Viva Chair Training’, ‘Viva panel training’, ‘Research supervisor training’ and ‘The role of the supervisor’ are part of our training programme. These courses, the arrangements discussed above relating to communication and engagement, and the informal mechanisms for discussing good practice (such as the microsites) all foster an openness toward matters of good conduct and misconduct. Genuine errors are accepted; self-critical practise is celebrated and supported.

Information on investigations of research misconduct that have been undertaken

2024/25

Type of allegation	Number of allegations reported to the organisation	Number of formal investigations	Number dismissed	Number upheld in part	Number upheld in full
Plagiarism (KMU)	4	4	2	0	2

2025/26 (Term 1)

Type of allegation	Number of allegations reported to the organisation	Number of formal investigations	Number dismissed	Number upheld in part	Number upheld in full
N/A	0	0	0	0	0

APPROVED by Research & Knowledge Exchange Committee 15th Jan 2026

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