

## UKCEH Annual Research Integrity Statement 2024

### Section 1: Key contact information

Question	Response
<b>1A. Name of organisation</b>	UK Centre for Ecology & Hydrology (UKCEH)
<b>1B. Type of organisation:</b>  higher education institution/industry/independent research performing organisation/other (please state)	Independent Research Organisation  A registered charity, limited by guarantee
<b>1C. Date statement approved (DD/MM/YY)</b>	15 May 2025
<b>1D. Web address of organisation's research integrity page (if applicable)</b>	<a href="https://www.ceh.ac.uk/research-integrity">https://www.ceh.ac.uk/research-integrity</a>
<b>1E. Named senior member of staff to oversee research integrity</b>	Name: Dr Douglas Wilson OBE, Science Director and Deputy CEO
	Email address: DWilson@ceh.ac.uk
<b>1F. Named member of staff who will act as a first point of contact for anyone wanting more information on matters of research integrity</b>	Name: Anita Petrie, Science Directorate Business Manager
	Email address: Anit@ceh.ac.uk

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

#### 2A. Description of current systems and culture

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

We place research integrity at the centre of all our research endeavours and ensure that research excellence is underpinned by the highest standards of honesty, transparency, accountability, rigour, and respect. This is reflected in our new strategy *Ambition 2030*.

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

Research Integrity is embedded within our Quality Management System (QMS), ensuring ethical and responsible research practices in alignment with ISO 9001 requirements for process integrity, risk management, and continuous improvement.

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

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

Internal websites for Research Integrity and Research Ethics provides details of relevant policies, documents, and guidance alongside links to internal and external resources, including UKRIO guidance, training, events and webinars.

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

The Research Integrity Policy and the Misconduct in Research Procedure was reviewed in 2024, including updating the responsible roles within UKCEH for raising formal allegations, or informal and confidential discussions. Alongside this a dedicated internal website on research integrity was developed to improve findability of information and resources for all

aspects of research integrity. General seminars on integrity topics were held during the year to further raise awareness. In 2024, UKCEH hosted an internal AI symposium of which a product was development of a set of Principles on the use of AI, which outlines how we will utilise AI in a way that is consistent with our values. An action was identified to further refine the ethics framework for use of AI, including specific guidance documents and incorporation into our Research Ethics Review process.

In 2024, UKCEH became a member of UKRIO and made available Research integrity training via the UKRIO pilot online course, for all research active staff. UKCEH also delivered staff training and awareness sessions on the new FAIR Data Stewardship Wizard tool.

UKCEH led the establishment of a Forum on research ethics and integrity across 6 NERC research centres to share knowledge and learning across topics of research ethics and integrity.

In 2024, UKCEH commenced a review of Trusted Research practices alongside awareness session with science management teams. This review and any changes will continue into 2025.

UKCEH operates a reward and recognition platform, designed to provide a quick and accessible way of recognising and rewarding staff and students who have carried out great work in line with our values (Integrity, excellence, and teamwork). 9% of all recognition awards in 2024 were directly linked to Integrity.

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

In 2024 we made much progress on research integrity provision, as outlined in 2B, which reflects our growing focus and attention on research integrity holistically.

In 2025 we will provide:

- renewed training and awareness for all staff on research ethics, with specific REC committee member training and training on reviewing research creating or utilising AI.
- Guidance and training to employees on utilising AI tools ethically

- regular open seminar sessions on Research Ethics and Integrity topics of interest. These may allow discussions on ethical dilemmas, errors and mistakes in research practice reproducibility, and research improvement,
- continuation of the NERC Forum across similar research institutes to allow for shared learning, and sharing best practice,
- Better incorporation of research ethics and integrity in new staff inductions,
- Commencing a review of guidance and resources on Authorship practices
- Review our integrity training offer.
- As part of the 2025 QMS audit plan, the research integrity process will be reviewed to assess compliance, effectiveness, and alignment with institutional and regulatory expectations. This audit may help identify areas for improvement, strengthening governance and accountability within the QMS framework.

UKCEH is investigating for 2025:

- Creation of research integrity champions, or similar network (Paused from 2024),
- Review and refresh of resources and training for Open Research

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

NA

## Section 3: Addressing research misconduct

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

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

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

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

In 2024, one incident relating to research integrity was raised, no formal allegation was made, and after informal preliminary review, no evidence of misconduct warranting further investigation was found.

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

Type of allegation	Number of allegations			
	Number of allegations reported to the organisation	Number of formal investigations	Number upheld in part after formal investigation	Number upheld in full after formal investigation
Fabrication	0	0	0	0
Falsification	0	0	0	0
Plagiarism	1	0	0	0
Failure to meet legal, ethical and professional obligations	0	0	0	0
Misrepresentation (eg data; involvement; interests; qualification; and/or publication history)	0	0	0	0
Improper dealing with allegations of misconduct	0	0	0	0
Multiple areas of concern (when received in a single allegation)	0	0	0	0
Other*	0	0	0	0
<b>Total:</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
*If you listed any allegations under the 'Other' category, please give a brief, high-level summary of their type here. Do not give any identifying or confidential information when responding.				
NA				

