

# Annual Statement on Research Integrity

If you have any questions about this template, please contact:  
[RIsecretariat@universitiesuk.ac.uk](mailto:RIsecretariat@universitiesuk.ac.uk).

## Section 1: Key contact information

Question	Response
<b>1A. Name of organisation</b>	Royal College of Music
<b>1B. Type of organisation:</b>  higher education institution/industry/independent research performing organisation/other (please state)	Conservatoire
<b>1C. Date statement approved by governing body (DD/MM/YY)</b>	[spring 2025]
<b>1D. Web address of organisation's research integrity page (if applicable)</b>	<a href="https://www.rcm.ac.uk/research/about/importantdocuments/">https://www.rcm.ac.uk/research/about/importantdocuments/</a>
<b>1E. Named senior member of staff to oversee research integrity</b>	Professor Robert Adlington (Head of Research and Doctoral Programmes)
	Email address: <a href="mailto:robert.adlington@rcm.ac.uk">robert.adlington@rcm.ac.uk</a>
<b>1F. Named member of staff who will act as a first point of contact for anyone</b>	Name: Emma Hewett (Research and Knowledge Exchange Manager)

wanting more information  
on matters of research  
integrity

Email address: [emma.hewett@rcm.ac.uk](mailto:emma.hewett@rcm.ac.uk)

## Section 2: Promoting high standards of research integrity and positive research culture.

### Description of actions and activities undertaken

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

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

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

Royal College of Music became a signatory to the Concordat to Support Research Integrity in 2019. Research integrity is supported by policies embodied in several different institutional documents. The **RCM Research Strategy 2020-27** commits to an inclusive research environment in which all members of staff (whether employed to undertake research or not) are given support for research activity; mentoring for research staff at every career stage; the treatment of postgraduate research students as peers; the principles of open research; ethical conduct and integrity in all research activity; and supporting diversity in research through accommodation of different circumstances and needs. The **RCM Research Ethics Policy** underscores the principles of the Concordat and offers guidance on the process for requesting ethics approval from the RCM Research Ethics Committee or, where relevant, the Conservatoires UK (CUK) Research Ethics Committee. The **RCM Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy** lays out the values and principles that govern all activity at the College, notably the expectation that difference is recognised and celebrated, and that every member of the College community is supported to achieve their full potential. The **Research Degrees Handbook**, which was comprehensively revised in summer 2024, details the training and support offered to research students, both within and beyond the College, and highlights the importance of research ethics and the processes that students must follow to

seek ethics approval. The **RCM Sustainability Strategy 2023-2035** ensures that the minimising of environmental impact is at the heart of all College decision-making, and that 'sustainability in teaching and research' is a key objective across our work. The **RCM Data Management (Retention) Policy** ensures that data retention across the College's different departments is managed according to best practice and in line with government legislation; a new **Research Data Management Policy** is in development (see below). The RCM's **Staff Disciplinary Procedure** governs the investigation of reported cases of research misconduct. Any staff member or student may report suspected cases of misconduct according to the guidance offered in the RCM's **Whistleblowing Policy and Procedure**. These provisions are backed up by the RCM's **Report and Support** platform which allows anonymous reporting of any concerning behaviour by a student or member of staff.

The implementation of these policies in relation to research is the responsibility of a number of committees and administrative positions. The **Research and Knowledge Exchange Committee** is attended by a representative cross-section of researchers and research support staff from across College; its primary function is to ensure a flourishing, inclusive and ethical research culture. The **Research Degrees Committee** is attended by a representative selection of staff involved in doctoral supervision plus the doctoral student representatives; it monitors student progress and is a primary forum for student feedback. The **Research Ethics Committee** considers applications for ethical approval for student and staff research projects, and guides policy on wider matters of research ethics. The **Knowledge Exchange Working Group** brings together staff with a shared interest in engaging with communities and organisations external to the College, in order to ensure integrated engagement strategies.

The **Head of Research and Doctoral Programmes** leads on strategy and governance for research and research degrees across the College; he chairs the Research and Knowledge Exchange Committee and the Research Degrees Committee. The **Doctoral Programmes Coordinator** oversees key elements of the research degrees programme, including research training, student progress monitoring, pastoral matters and community-building. From autumn 2024 the Head of Research and the Doctoral Programmes Coordinator are serving a two-year term as co-chairs for the Research Ethics Committee. The **Research and Knowledge Exchange Manager** supports the Head of Research in matters of research strategy and has primary responsibility for the development and visibility of knowledge exchange activity at the College. The **Research Data Officer** maintains the College's research repository RCM Research Online and has responsibility for revising and updating the College's policies on Open Access and research data management. The **Research Finance Officer** ensures compliance with funder and institutional requirements through robust and transparent management and handling of pre- and post-award research finances, including drawing up research and knowledge exchange contracts and

collaboration agreements. The **Research Projects Administrator** assists the Research Finance Officer and the Research and Knowledge Exchange Manager with the monitoring of internal and external research and knowledge exchange funding allocations, and serves as Secretary to the Research Ethics Committee.

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

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

Academic year 2023/24 brought a number of changes and developments, building on the new arrangements introduced in the previous year.

The periodic **Doctoral Programmes Review** took place in 2023/24, allowing a root-and-branch review of all aspects of the doctoral programme. The Review drew on extensive feedback from research students, supervisors and external experts and produced a series of recommendations, several of which are relevant to this document. The Review recommended an expansion of in-house training for research students, with specific attention to students beyond year 1 of their studies. It recommended more regular training and mentoring sessions for doctoral supervisors. A further key recommendation was for a new system of annual progression reviews, ensuring that the progress of all research students is monitored on an annual basis. All of these recommendations are now being implemented. The research training programme for doctoral students has expanded to involve multiple weekly sessions, including sessions specifically designed for students further advanced in their studies, and with additional bookable surgery and mentoring hours. Research ethics has received new focus within this training programme, with all new students supported to consider the ethical implications of their project from the very start of their studies. Training for doctoral supervisors in the past 12 months has included mandatory refresher sessions for all supervisors, and bespoke training for new supervisors. The Annual Progression Reviews were launched in September 2024; the template form that students are asked to complete includes a dedicated section on research ethics, ensuring that students reflect on the ethical aspects of their projects and plan their ethics approval applications.

We have continued to build our support for researchers to engage with the **open research** agenda. Our Research Data Officer updates our RCM Open Access Policy document as new UKRI and REF guidance is produced, meaning that research staff and students have a thorough and reliable guide to changing policy in one document. We have also engaged with the UKRI Open Access team to represent the challenges of their policy for small institutions without reliable block grant funding to meet open access costs. Our conversations with the London Arts and Humanities Partnership (who provide AHRC studentships for RCM research students on a competitive basis) has led to an agreement from LAHP to commit match-funding for LAHP-funded students who are expected to publish in line with UKRI Open Access policy.

Our Research Data Officer is leading on a revision of our **Research Data Management Policy**. The existing policy document is now out-of-date and needs a comprehensive refresh to recognise current best practice. This process has involved the formation of a small working group representing diverse research specialisms at the College, whose input will ensure that the revised policy meets the needs of all College researchers. Reflecting our commitment to research integrity, we are aiming for a balance between the move towards more open data and the concerns expressed by some research communities (including the Global Indigenous Data Alliance) regarding the negative effects that may arise from data sharing. In this regard we support the #BeFAIRandCARE agenda. The College's **Intellectual Property Policy** is also undergoing a review, following some external consultancy from a specialist in academic IP; completion of this work will be a priority for next year.

The College has been selected as a submitting institution for the **REF2029 People, Culture and Environment pilot exercise**. We put ourselves forward for this exercise because we felt that it would assist in the development of good practice across all elements of our research culture. The guidance materials for the exercise contain a range of prompts that will encourage reflection about things we currently do well, and areas where there is room for improvement.

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

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

The past year has brought important new developments and initiatives, as described above. Priorities for the academic year 2024/25 will be completion of the revised Research Data Management Policy and completion of revisions to the Intellectual Property Policy. As mentioned above, our participation in the REF2029 PCE pilot exercise will prompt useful reflection on areas of our research culture requiring further development. We are in the process of integrating an Arkivum system within our repository RCM Research Online, which will facilitate storage and long-term preservation of our research outputs and research data.

It continues to be a challenge to offer an integrated programme of staff training for College researchers: like other SSIs the College does not have the luxury of a large staff development unit to provide in-house training, nor does it have substantial resources to employ external providers. We are continuing to discuss with fellow SSIs within Conservatoires UK (CUK) ways to pool resources so that up-to-date training on matters relating to research integrity can be more consistently provided across our staff base. This would involve some focus on the implications for research conduct of AI. A significant development in the coming year will be the inception of a new CUK Research Ethics and Integrity Committee, which is explicitly aimed to provide leadership in ethics and integrity across all CUK institutions.

## Section 3: Addressing research misconduct

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

Please provide:

- a brief summary of relevant organisation policies/ processes (e.g. research misconduct procedure, whistle-blowing policy, bullying/harassment policy; appointment of a third party to act as confidential liaison for persons wishing to raise concerns) and brief information on the periodic review of research misconduct processes (e.g. date of last review; any major changes during the period under review; date when processes will next be reviewed).
- information on how the organisation creates and embeds a research environment in which all staff, researchers and students feel comfortable to report instances of misconduct (e.g. code of practice for research, whistle-blowing, research misconduct procedure, informal liaison process, website signposting for reporting systems, training, mentoring, reflection and evaluation

of policies, practices and procedures).

- anonymised key lessons learned from any investigations into allegations of misconduct which either identified opportunities for improvements in the organisation's investigation procedure and/or related policies / processes/ culture or which showed that they were working well.

The investigation of cases of research misconduct is governed by the RCM's **Staff Disciplinary Procedure**. This details the nature of the investigation and appeals process and possible disciplinary outcomes. Cases may be reported by any staff member or student, following the guidance offered in the RCM's **Whistleblowing Policy and Procedure**.

At present there is no separate policy for investigating misconduct in research specifically, nor is the process for reporting possible cases of research misconduct especially visibly signposted. This is an area for development as part of our work on the REF2029 PCE Pilot.

There have been no cases of reported research misconduct in the past academic year.

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

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

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

Type of allegation	Number of allegations			
	Number of allegations reported to the organisation	Number of formal investigations	Number upheld in part after formal investigation	Number upheld in full after formal investigation
Fabrication	0	0	0	0
Falsification	0	0	0	0
Plagiarism	0	0	0	0
Failure to meet legal, ethical and professional obligations	0	0	0	0
Misrepresentation (eg data; involvement; interests; qualification; and/or publication history)	0	0	0	0
Improper dealing with allegations of misconduct	0	0	0	0
Multiple areas of concern (when received in a single allegation)	0	0	0	0
<i>Other*</i>	0	0	0	0
<b>Total:</b>	0	0	0	0

**\*If you listed any allegations under the 'Other' category, please give a brief, high-level summary of their type here. Do not give any identifying or confidential information when responding.**

*[Please insert response if applicable]*