

NOC annual statement on research integrity

Section 1: Key contact information

Question	Response
1A. Name of organisation	National Oceanography Centre
1B. Type of organisation: higher education institution/industry/independent research performing organisation/other (please state)	Independent Research Organisation
1C. Date statement approved by governing body (DD/MM/YY)	23 rd July 2026
1D. Web address of organisation's research integrity page (if applicable)	NA
1E. Named senior member of staff to oversee research integrity	Name: Len Shaffrey
	Email address: Len.Shaffrey@noc.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: Len Shaffrey
	Email address: Len.Shaffrey@noc.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

- **Policies and systems**

The National Oceanography Centre is committed to high standards of research integrity which lies at the heart of an effective and trusted worldwide scientific research endeavour. Research integrity underpins the quality and reliability of research outputs and of decisions made in the light of those findings. It is important that all those who use and are informed by NOC's research outputs - including the wider public - can have trust and confidence in the results, the methods used and the processes by which the results were obtained. It is also important that there is trust and confidence in the academic integrity of those who undertake the research. NOC expects all researchers it employs (and those who are permitted to use NOC as an affiliation in the presentation of research and data) to be honest in the design, conduct and presentation of research and for them to abide by high standards of research integrity. The NOC Research Integrity Policy sets out clearly to our staff, collaborators, funders and to all our beneficiaries the principles NOC will apply in maintaining its research integrity and to set out clearly conduct that NOC considers unacceptable. Research integrity and misconduct is clearly defined along with the approach to dealing with suspected cases of research misconduct.

Our values and behaviour frameworks set expectations for staff, and the following policies also support a culture of research integrity:

NOC's Ethics Policy outlines the ethical standards of behaviour expected of all employees and outlines NOC's approach to research ethics. It also outlines the principles that should be considered when determining whether and how to undertake a particular activity. The policy is further supported by the NOC Ethics Sub-committee who are responsible for enhancing trust and confidence in the ethical governance and actions of NOC.

NOC's Code of Conduct Policy outlines the expected behaviours for anyone representing the organisation in an official capacity.

NOC's Conflicts of interest Policy ensures that NOC and its staff act with integrity, transparency, and in compliance with the legal and ethical obligations set by the Charity Commission and best corporate governance standards. It provides guidance on how staff should manage potential conflicts of interest and seek permission for external professional activities to protect NOC's reputation, resources, and financial sustainability.

NOC's Disciplinary Policy and associated procedures are utilised when it may appear that expected standards of behaviour, conduct and attendance have not been met. The purpose of the Disciplinary Policy and Procedure is to outline the framework for

dealing with these incidents and resolve problems with employee conduct which cannot be resolved through less formal advice, encouragement and support which should form part of the management of all employees. The aim is to ensure prompt, consistent and fair treatment for all employees and to assist in enabling managers and staff to be clear about expectations

NOC's Whistleblowing policy aims to encourage staff to report suspected wrongdoing as soon as possible, in the knowledge that their concerns will be taken seriously and investigated as appropriate, and that their confidentiality will be respected wherever possible. It provides staff with guidance as to how to raise those concerns and reassure staff that no one will be dismissed, disciplined, or disadvantaged for raising a concern in good faith. It is intended to enable staff to raise concerns about wrongdoing that is in the public interest, including matters that may impact NOC's integrity, governance, use of public funds, or the safety and

- **Communications and engagement**

Our Research integrity induction sets NOCs expectations for staff conducting research and offers advice on the related support available during a career at NOC. The induction covers; What Research Integrity is, NOC's commitments and approaches, Research ethics while working with data, Publications ethics, Integrity in peer review & how to deal with research misconduct.

Policy and procedure related to Research Integrity are available via our internal internet pages.

Dedicated intranet pages covering Ethics, Conflict of Interest and Whistleblowing are also available to all staff to receive updates, latest best practice and view policy and procedure documentation.

Matters relating to Research Integrity would also be discussed at :

- Open Staff meetings are utilised to provide significant policy changes and updates
- Leadership Forum (which consists of all Group Heads within NOC) is a discussion and feedback mechanism which allows open discussion and cascade of information.
- Staff Focus group is a forum for staff to share ideas and views with senior management and each other on matters of operational/service provision change.
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- **Culture, development and leadership**

NOC's culture is underpinned by its six core values: Excellence, Innovative Thinking, Empowerment, Environmental Responsibility, Integrity, and Working in Partnership. These values guide our internal conduct as well as our relationships with collaborative partners and all external stakeholders. They are interwoven with our vision and our

Behaviours Framework, shaping a values-driven culture that supports high-quality, responsible research.

Our approach to Research Integrity is connected to these values and is fundamental to how we conduct and communicate our research. The value of Integrity ensures that our work is carried out with honesty, transparency, and accountability, fostering trust in our findings and in NOC as an institution. Excellence drives rigour, reproducibility, and adherence to the highest standards of scientific practice. Innovative Thinking encourages openness, critical challenge, and the responsible exploration of new ideas. Empowerment supports researchers at all career stages to take ownership of good research practice, raise concerns where necessary, and contribute to a culture of continuous improvement.

In addition, Working in Partnership reinforces our commitment to responsible collaboration, ensuring that shared research activities uphold agreed standards. Environmental Responsibility aligns our research practices with broader societal and environmental stewardship. Together, these values foster a supportive, inclusive, and transparent research culture in which Research Integrity is embedded.

NOC promotes a culture of continuous improvement and development, which further strengthens our commitment to Research Integrity by ensuring that good research practice evolves alongside emerging standards and expectations. This culture encourages critical self-evaluation, the sharing of best practice, and responsiveness to lessons learned. By embedding continuous improvement into our research environment, we ensure that our approaches to Research Integrity remain current and consistently applied across all areas of our work.

NOC's leadership plays a critical role in promoting Research Integrity by bringing our core values into everyday decisions and ways of working. Leaders across the organisation help to set expectations by modelling good practice and a commitment to high-quality research. By doing this, they create an environment where Research Integrity is prioritised, concerns can be raised, and good practice is recognised and encouraged.

- **Monitoring and reporting**

Our Legal and Governance would oversee and monitor allegations or reporting of Research Misconduct.

2B. Changes and developments during the period under review

In the past 12 months;

We updated our Research Integrity statement to comply with the concordat. Our research integrity statement is also now available via our externally facing website.

We released our AI policy and guidance for staff and researchers in the year, addressing issues relevant to Research Integrity.

Our Prevention of Sexual Harassment Policy was released along with mandatory training for all staff.

Our Conflict-of-interest Policy was also updated and guidance for staff reissued emphasising their responsibilities as an employee of NOC to adhere to policy and procedure.

A fraud event was held to highlight what fraud means and how it may impact staff; these are held annually.

NOC's Legal and Governance team have also presented at an Open Staff Meeting on Modern Slavery and Conflicts of Interest.

2C. Reflections on progress and plans for future developments

Compliance with the Concordat has been our focus in this reporting year and in doing so NOC completed a gap analysis. This has provided NOC with a framework for future improvements and developments to our Research Integrity approach.

Focus for the coming year is to review and update our Research Integrity Policy and intranet pages and to bring a more harmonised approach to Research Integrity, Ethics and Trusted Research. Ensuring staff understand the touch points and what their responsibilities are in ensuring best practice is embedded into all NOC activities.

We are also reviewing and refreshing our induction approach (including RI) and will review related ongoing training materials for all staff.

Section 3: Addressing research misconduct

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

The following policy and/or procedures are relevant to our RI approach and would be relevant to cases of Research Misconduct

- Research Integrity Policy (covers Research Misconduct)
- Code of Conduct Policy
- Whistleblowing Policy
- Prevention of Sexual Harassment Policy
- Disciplinary Policy & Procedure.
- Grievance Policy & Procedure
- Investigation Procedure

All policies and procedures are reviewed and updated in line with our governance framework and schedule. Earlier reviews can be triggered when there are legal, regulatory or best practice updates, an incident occurs or feedback suggests this is required. Any major changes would be ratified at the appropriate committee meeting or board.

Underpinning all our policies, NOCs Values and Behaviour Framework outline expectations of all staff. Mechanisms are available for all staff to report concerns around research misconduct including:

- Regular line management discussions, Performance & Development Review
- Access to dedicated HR Business Partners
- Whistleblowing intranet site and online report form.
- Above listed Policies and Procedures.

NOC have a process for implementation of lessons learned from any investigations undertaken, with follow up actions and implementation of improvements overseen by the Legal and Governance team.



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	0	0	0	0
Failure to meet legal, ethical and professional obligations				
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
Total:	0	0	0	0
*If you listed any allegations under the 'Other' category, please give a brief, high-level summary of their type here. Do not give any identifying or confidential information when responding.				
<i>[Please insert response if applicable]</i>				