Research Ethics and Integrity Policy

Governance

The University has established a framework for the governance of research ethics and integrity in which the University Research Committee reports to the Senate and has responsibility for the oversight of relevant ethics and integrity issues arising from research, the formulation of relevant policies, and the consideration of significant or complex issues arising from particular research.

School Research Ethics Committees have responsibility for the operational review of ethical issues arising from research proposals, auditing and monitoring compliance, and disseminating good practice. School Research Ethics Committees report to the University Research Group, which reports to University Research Committee.

This Policy should be read in conjunction with the University Policies on Intellectual Property, Whistleblowing, Research Misconduct, Open Access Publishing, Data Protection, Research Data Management and relevant Staff or Student Disciplinary procedures. In cases of conflict between this policy and another, this policy will prevail for matters directly relevant to its remit.

Scope and Purpose

All staff and students of the University have a responsibility to undertake research activities with the highest possible standards of integrity and practice. This policy applies to all academic staff and postgraduate researchers who are engaged in research projects at any level.

This 'Research Ethics and Integrity Policy' outlines the standards for research and the responsibilities of those involved. It is designed to ensure that research is conducted in accordance with appropriate ethical, legal and professional frameworks and standards. **The University expects all those engaged in research to observe and uphold these principles** which are designed to enhance research quality and integrity.

Where research is undertaken in conjunction with a third party, the University expects all members of the collaboration to comply with the ethical codes in place at both the University of Huddersfield and the partner institution or organisation. Should there be an absence of an ethical code or a lower requirement in place at the third party, the University Policy will prevail.

The Principles

The University has an obligation to ensure that:

1. Research complies with:

    a. statutory requirements (including local requirements where research is undertaken outside the UK)

    b. applicable national and international codes of ethical practice (including local requirements where research is undertaken outside the UK),

    c. guidelines set out by relevant professional bodies

    d. University policies relating to donations, gifts, hospitality and the Anti-Corruption, Bribery and Fraud Policy

2. Research is conducted in a way that safeguards the health and well-being of those conducting or participating in the research or who may be impacted by the research. Wherever possible, risks should be identified in advance so that they can be evaluated, monitored and appropriately managed

3. Conclusions from research are published and disseminated appropriately

4. Those conducting research:

   a. are impartial

   b. are independent

   c. have been appropriately trained

   d. are as transparent as possible in declaring funding sources

   e. give consideration to the commercial, political, cultural or ethical sensitivity of particular types of research

   f. declare offers of donations, gifts and hospitality in accordance with the Expenses and Benefits Policy and Procedure and the Anti-Corruption, Bribery and Fraud Policy

5. The dignity of those participating in or a subject of the research is respected – including:

   a. opportunity to consent to participate, withdraw from or refuse to take part in projects

   b. ensuring that participation is on the basis of fully informed consent

   c. maintaining confidentiality

   d. safeguarding the security of data – including anonymisation, future use and disposal of data as appropriate

   e. due regard for the vulnerability of any individual or group – including children, young people and vulnerable adults.

Consideration of ethical approval

All research requires an assessment to be undertaken and documented to determine whether or not ethical approval is necessary and the level at which that approval is required: supervisor, School or University.

Where required, ethical approval must be secured before any data collection is started. Where personal data (as defined in the General Data Protection Act 2018) is to be collected or otherwise processed for the purpose of the research, then ethical approval must be secured in advance. The University's Data Protection Policy applies in respect of the processing of personal data for research purposes.

Rejection of ethical approval

In cases of rejection of requests for ethical approval of a research proposal, the researcher will be informed and be supplied with an indication of the reasons for rejection with an opportunity for a further resubmission.

Appeals against the rejection of a proposal can be made to the next level of authority in the approval process, whose decision is final. There is no route for appeal against the rejection of a proposal by the University Research Committee.

Training and development

All staff and postgraduate researchers must undertake or be able to demonstrate the completion of up-to-date training in research integrity and ethics.

Monitoring and Compliance

In cases where it is suspected that a researcher is suspected of being in breach of this policy or the terms of the ethical approval, the University will take action at the appropriate level to resolve the matter. Resolution may involve other University regulations, including but not limited to the student regulations on Research Misconduct, staff or PGR disciplinary procedures.

The University will undertake appropriate monitoring of research-related activity to ensure that appropriate and effective use of the ethical approval process is being made.

The University will undertake appropriate monitoring of research projects that have received ethical approval to ensure compliance with the initial approval.

Further details are included in the Research Ethics and Integrity Framework.

Suitability of funders/collaborators

The University's policy is that it does not knowingly collaborate with, or accept any monies from, sources of funding where the aims of the bodies concerned:

- are illegal under UK law

- are contrary to the research, education or wider aims or objectives of the University

- may damage the reputation of the University.

Anyone with concerns regarding the nature of a potential funding body or collaborator should contact the PVC Research Innovation and Knowledge Exchange.

POLICY SIGN-OFF AND OWNERSHIP DETAILS

Document name:	Research Ethics and Integrity Policy
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Owner (if different from above):	Head of Research Intelligence, RIKE
Document Location:	https://www.hud.ac.uk/media/policydocuments/Research-Ethics-and-Integrity-Policy.pdf
Compliance Checks:	Monitoring of research-related activity to ensure appropriate and effective use of the ethical approval process, and of research projects to ensure compliance with the initial approval.
Related Policies/Procedures:	Intellectual Property, Whistleblowing, Research Misconduct, Open Access Publishing, Data Protection, Research Data Management, the Expenses and Benefits Policy and Procedure, the Anti-Corruption, Bribery and Fraud Policy, and relevant Staff or Student Disciplinary procedures

REVISION HISTORY

Version	Date	Revision description/Summary of changes	Author
V1.1	June 2019	First review	Deputy Director of Research and Enterprise
V1.2	March 2020	Governance changes reflected in relation to dissolution of UREIC and URC taking on the ethics and integrity responsibilities	Deputy Director of Research and Enterprise
V1.3	Sept 2022	Minor changes to improve accessibility and consistency, including name change to RIKE. Updated to add requirement for academic staff to have completed training in research integrity.	Head of Researcher Environment