

Northeastern University - London

Annual Report on Research Integrity

October 2022

The Concordat to Support Research Integrity¹ requires UK organisations to publish an annual statement on research integrity, and regularly review its processes and policies to ensure best practice in research. This report is an account of research integrity activities and developments in the 2021-2022 academic year and has been approved by the Northeastern London Board on 19 Oct 2022.

Background

NU-L, formerly New College of the Humanities (NCH), gained UK university title in 2022. Launched in 2012 as a small, humanities-focused College, NU-L has approximately 100 academic staff, of which a third are engaged in research. Research activity spans all six faculties: Economics, English, History (including Art History), Law, Philosophy (including Computer Science and Psychology), Politics and International Relations and an experiential learning department, EDGE (Experiential Digital Global Education).

NU-L has undergone a period of rapid growth following acquisition by Northeastern University (Boston, US) in 2020. As such, NU-L has made a number of changes in the last year regarding how it manages and monitors research and will continue to develop its processes and practices in accordance with the Concordat to support Research Integrity and UKRIO guidance.

As such a new central Research Services department was set up in 2022 to manage research, advise researchers and to have oversight of process and policy development. Research Services reports directly into the Research and Knowledge Exchange Committee, chaired by the Associate Dean for Research and Knowledge Exchange. The Associate Dean's form the Academic Senior Management Team, reporting directly to the Academic Dean who has overall responsibility for all academic matters at NU-L. Who in turn chairs the Academic Board and is a member of the University's Executive Committee.

The Research Ethics Committee is overseen and managed by Research Services, and reports directly into the Research and Knowledge Exchange Committee. Research Services works closely with Northeastern Research management departments [NU-RES](#) and [Research Development](#), for shared best practice and alignment of UK and US research integrity frameworks.

¹ <https://www.universitiesuk.ac.uk/topics/research-and-innovation/concordat-support-research-integrity>

Actions and activities that have been undertaken to support and strengthen understanding and the application of research integrity issues (for example postgraduate and researcher training, or process reviews)

- Setting up a new Research Services department to oversee, manage and monitor all research activity and give guidance and best practice to academic and support staff
- Institutional contact with overall responsibility for research integrity appointed: *Prof Scott Wildman, Academic Dean*
- Institutional contact with responsibility for the monitoring and management of research integrity, including enquiries and concerns assigned: *Dr Carolyn Barker, Head of Research Services*
- Updated Research and Knowledge Exchange Committee terms of reference with clearer responsibilities and accountability
- Updated Research Ethics Committee terms of reference with clearer responsibilities and accountability
- Development of academic research area leads, who will champion best practice in research
- Research Services is currently developing a research integrity training programme, with Northeastern (Chief Research Operations Officer and Research Security Analyst – Research Compliance) and UKRIO. This will be rolled out to staff in the 2022-2023 academic year
- Revision of ethics forms to better reflect UK wording, regulations and focus
- Mapping of US and UK research integrity frameworks in order to manage movement of researchers and students between the two campuses.
- Initiated the development of a Trusted Research policy, in accordance with BEIS advice and guidance, who visited the University in 2022
- Developed a project risk assessment questionnaire for international collaborations
- Started working with UKRIO to review and expand research policies and best practice and implement training relating to research integrity, using the Concordat self-assessment tool
- Published a revised [academic misconduct](#) policy

Institutional Processes for dealing with allegations of misconduct

There were no formal investigations of research misconduct in 2021 – 2022.

What the institution has learned from any formal investigations of research misconduct that have been undertaken, including what lessons have been learned to prevent the same type of incident re-occurring

Whilst there have been no formal investigations of research misconduct, the university has been consulting with UKRIO on reviewing its practices and is currently using the 'Checklist for Researchers' to identify potential areas of issue.

Statement on how the institution creates and embeds a research environment in which all staff, researchers and students feel comfortable to report instances of misconduct

The University held its inaugural Research Day in summer 2022, bringing researchers, senior management and professional staff together for the first time. A researcher directory and contacts of key professional staff were circulated, along with internal and external talks on developing research. As a small institution, with an open-plan office environment, set in a single building, NU-L benefits from a close relationship between research staff (academic and professional) and senior management. To reinforce this open policy, the Academic board (the top level decision-making body for all academic matters) has recently changed its terms of reference to allow any faculty member to attend. Academic board also includes student representatives who feed into decision making and help shape the future direction of NU-L. Research matters are regularly communicated to staff and students via the internal newsletters. Furthermore, a new academic structure, to be launched in 2022, will provide clearer reporting lines and transparency over research misconduct processes.