

Research Integrity Annual Statement (RIAS)

Academic Year 2024 / 2025

1. Summary of actions and activities

- 1.1 Outlined here is a summary of actions and activities that have been undertaken to support and strengthen research integrity across SOAS in line with the commitments as set out in the revised [UK Concordat to Support Research Integrity](#) 2025.
- 1.2 The statement produced annually is in line with Commitment 5 (Accountability and continuous improvement in research integrity) of the *Concordat*.

2. Summary of the work undertaken by the Research Ethics Panel (REP)

- 2.1 The Panel convened three-formal sessions (Oct-24, Jan-25 and Apr-25) over the course of the academic year. This was in addition to the monthly virtual REP, (excluding August and December) where no listings session was convened. A total of 53 submissions proceeded to be determined by the Research Ethics Panel (REP), representing a slight decrease from the previous academic year (57). The largest proportion of referrals were from PhD students (24) followed by students on Taught Masters programmes (14).
- 2.2 As directed by the Chair, significant work occurred over the course of the academic year to revise and update the entire ethics framework. This included the Research Ethics Policy, ethics framework questions and accompanying guidance note; Procedural Guidance and the Terms of Reference for the Research Ethics Panel as it sits within the Constitutional Documents. The amendments were presented before the relevant Committees for approval and obtained.
- 2.3 One of the key areas was to facilitate Health and Social Care research including where approvals are required from the Health Regulation Authority (HRA).
- 2.4 Multiple actions arising from the UNIAC Audit undertaken in February / March 2025 have resulted in a substantially revised [Procedural Guidance](#) issued provides for clarification of delegated authorities of approval, Health and Social Care research, (including IRAS submissions and HRA approval); amendment to the mandated referral categories to incorporate research that involves the development, deployment and/or use of artificial intelligence, including in research. The revised Procedural Guidance also now provides an additional annex, further to the Constitutional Documents that incorporates a summary of the roles and responsibilities for the Research Ethics Panel (REP).

3. Communications

- 3.1 The REP published three newsletters across the academic year (one per academic term) detailing work being undertaken, highlighting issues as well as relevant changes. Despite changing to a Semester system, the newsletter will continue to be published and cascaded across SOAS' research community.

4. Training

- 4.1 Revisions were made to the [Epigeum Research Integrity course](#) which included an additional module on 'Research Supervision and Mentorship,' and a new 'Research Integrity: Refresher,' which is a three module programme for academic staff who have previously completed the mandatory components.
- 4.2 Data for the upgraded version of the course (Core Component) was very strong, with a total of 730 registrations and 582 passing the course, representing an 80% pass rate overall.
- 4.3 The mandate for course completion has formally been expanded to now include RKE Convenors, Doctoral Supervisors and all academic (dissertation) supervisors for students on Taught

(undergraduate/ postgraduate) courses. Monitoring remains ongoing with respect to uptake and completion rates.

- 4.4 Training sessions delivered across the University over the course of the academic year. These included a newly convened workshop for RKE Convenors, as well as sessions delivered to PhD students at the Doctoral School and students on taught MA programmes.

5. Safeguarding

- 5.1 No serious incidents were reported over the course of the academic year.
- 5.2 A total of four DBS checks were obtained to facilitate academic staff in the delivery of research projects.

6. Data Protection

- 6.1 With the introduction of the the [Data Use and Access Act 2025](#), significant updates are currently being made to the [Code of Practice](#), including the template participant information sheet and consent form in conjunction with Information Compliance.
- 6.2 As it relates to academic research the new legislation introduces several new changes, including a statutory definition of ‘scientific research and statistical purpose,’ more simplified rules for processing special category data within a research context and rules regarding the re-use of personal data for compatible purposes.

7. Research Misconduct

- 7.1 There were no ongoing or live investigations arising from academic year 2024/2025 relating to allegations of research misconduct. Two allegations were raised but did not precipitate triggering of internal processes as each of these related to allegations of plagiarism involving individuals at other universities.
- 7.2 The first relates to a PhD student and the nature of the allegation concerns plagiarism by a student at a different University. Meetings have been held with the student and supervisor concerning support for raising this allegation formally under the *Concordat* aligned procedures at said university. At present the matter remains pending.
- 7.3 The second relates to an allegation of plagiarism raised by an academic member of staff, again concerning a different University. An allegation has been formally lodged with that University.
- 7.4 Some amendments are anticipated to the overall research misconduct policy to take account of changes being made to the reporting route(s). Once finalised this will be published.