

Policy on Research Integrity

Owner: Pro Vice-Chancellor for Research and Knowledge Exchange

Version: 1.3

Approved: October 2019

Approved by: Research and Knowledge Exchange Committee

Reviewed: 9 December 2022, minor changes to update terminology

+44 (0)20 7133 5160

rpo@londonmet.ac.uk

Our [University Research Policy](#) asserts the importance of research and expresses expectations, about how we will support and conduct it, and how it is important to our idea of a University. The most recent [University Strategy \(2019/20-2024/25\)](#) also commits us to growing our pool of research activity and to consolidating and developing our knowledge exchange and impact beyond the academy, particularly but not exclusively in our desire to support London in meeting its wide-ranging challenges.

1. Scope of the Policy

- 1.1. This Policy on Research Integrity set outs the standards we expect researchers to maintain when pursuing research whilst members of our University community. We require researchers themselves to familiarise themselves with all of our research policies and to adhere to them in both principle and action. We require Heads of School, School Heads of Research and Knowledge Exchange, Chairs of Ethics Committees and members of the Research and Postgraduate Office (RPO) to manage research properly and to fulfil the obligations of this policy.
- 1.2. The Scope of our policy is governed by the requirement for all of our researchers to be **honest, rigorous, and transparent** in conducting their research and presenting their research, regardless of the form in which such work appears publicly. Scholars must be **rigorous** and **honest** working to conventional disciplinary expectations; in citing the work of others; in declaring conflicts of interest; in maintaining confidential materials properly and in line with the expectations of providers of data; and when communicating results to peers and the public.
- 1.3. Where researchers or managers are unsure about issues of ethics, integrity or acceptable progression, they should seek advice from the RPO.
- 1.4. We will use University disciplinary procedures where breaches of such expectations occur.
- 1.5. We will support whistle-blowers who wish to report a breach of standards which is in the public interest and we will investigate such cases fully. However, whistleblowing should not be used as an alternative to our grievance, harassment or bullying procedures.

2. Good Practice in Research

- 2.1. Researchers must comply with all legal and ethical requirements. They must follow guidelines from funders, co-producers, partner institutions, etc. All projects must gain ethics approval from School Ethics Committees, regardless of the funder, and whether or not the same project will go through the Ethics procedures of another institution. This requirement applies to both UK and international collaborations.
- 2.2. Researchers must ensure that they and their work is insured and indemnified to a level acceptable to the University. This will be determined by the legal team in the University Secretary's Office.

3. Research Data Management

- 3.1. London Metropolitan believes that data management is vital to research integrity.
- 3.2. Research data should be stored securely, and researchers must be familiar with our data management policy and must adhere to it (see 8.1.3 below).
- 3.3. Research data must be stored securely on Box and sharing of data within this system.
- 3.4. The University recognises the importance of data sharing as a means of building networks, extending influence and generating impact. Whether by London Met research teams, or teams inside and outside the university must be considered as part of our Ethics approval system. Researchers must familiarise themselves with our guidance on Box storage (see below 8.1.5 below).
- 3.5. Researchers must also be aware of our policy on research and GDPR, including the relationship between us and our data providers, in terms of our obligations and their rights (see below 8.1.4).

4. Health and Safety

4.1. Researchers have a duty of care to all involved in their research, from the teams conducting the research, supporting staff working in laboratories, etc., research students, participants, and others. Researchers must do all they can to avoid harm, risk or danger. They must report any potential or actual breaches of the University codes on Health and Safety. Our basic principle is that the value of the research must outweigh the risks. If you have any concerns about Health and Safety, you must talk to your area Risk Manager.

5. The Research Itself

5.1. Researchers should be undertaking research they are competent and appropriately trained to conduct. Researchers should give cognisance to the importance of assembling the appropriate teams to conduct research. They should also consider risk assessment in order to ensure the veracity of the work. Since universities are publicly funded, it is important that researchers recognise that these standards apply to work undertaken on university time and not just to externally funded work.

5.2. Researchers must take care to design research carefully so that: it answers appropriate and relevant questions; it deploys relevant methods; and that it embraces data that will enable a good outcome, both intellectually and ethically.

5.3. Researchers must consider the tests which will ensure the robustness of the integrity of the research: **ethical approval**; **fiscal prudence** in terms of budget-setting and financial management during the life of the project; and **declaration of interests**, whether personal, financial or any other.

5.4. We operate a system of **peer review** through our Peer Review College, via mentors and mentoring, and, informally, within the professoriate. All researchers should consider engaging actively with peer review systems to ensure their projects are of the highest quality. In any case, all external projects must be peer reviewed. Contact the RPO to engage with the process.

6. Publications

- 6.1. Publication is a form of dissemination of knowledge and is an objective of the University. Whatever form publication takes, it must be conducted to the highest standards.
- 6.2. Published works should be produced to maximise the benefit to the University, partners or funders. Published works such as articles must therefore be stored on our repository within three months of acceptance by journals.
- 6.3. The University recognises the importance of publishing and sharing data. Whilst this must conform to ethical agreements, we fully support principles of open data and open access.
- 6.4. Publication must accurately reflect findings and must be evidenced by those findings.
- 6.5. A publication must give due reference to all authors and also to those who have contributed to the work, whether advisors, funders, peer reviewers (even anonymously).
- 6.6. The order of authors should be justifiable under audit.
- 6.7. Anyone who has not contributed substantially to conceiving, executing or interpreting the publication or the relevant research behind it, should not be included as an author.

7. Training

- 7.1. The University provides training on all aspects covered by this Policy on Research Integrity. Researchers should make full use of the programme and attend sessions designed to help them. Where additional training needs might exist, these should be identified through My Review, or in discussion with Mentors, and should be included in Staff Research Plans. The University will then seek to make available training for which there is an identified need.

8. Other Policies

8.1. Researchers should be familiar with other related policies. We are signatories to the [Concordat to Support Research Integrity](#), and this provides deep guidance on all aspects of the topic. We also are signatories to the [Concordat to Support the Careers of Researchers](#), and this should govern your approach to developing colleagues' and researchers' careers, if you are a Principal Investigator/Data Manager. Additionally, please be aware of the following policies or guidelines:

- 8.1.1. [The University Research Policy](#)
- 8.1.2. [The University Ethics Policy](#)
- 8.1.3. [The University Data Protection Policy](#)
- 8.1.4. [Data Usage Guidelines](#)
- 8.1.5. [Supporting Early Career Researchers](#)

8.2. External Policies;

- 8.2.1. [Concordat on Research Integrity](#), of which the University is a signatory.
- 8.2.2. [The Principles of Public Life](#)
- 8.2.3. [URKI Statement](#)
- 8.2.4. [NIHR statement](#)