



Ministry
of Defence

JSP 732 Research Integrity

Part 1: Directive

Foreword

Placing high quality science, analysis, and evidence at the heart of Defence is critical to making the right decisions and protecting the UK, its territories, and its allies.

In an increasingly volatile world, Defence personnel should be reassured that the decisions, equipment, and processes they use to deliver for the UK consider a wide spectrum of requirements, are reliably informed, and will produce consistent results. To enable this now and into the future, the Ministry of Defence has joined the rest of Government and the UK's academic institutions in committing to the highest national and international ethical research standards.

The standards, set out by the Concordat to Support Research Integrity, focus on five core values of honesty; rigour; transparency and open communication; care and respect; and accountability in Defence's role as a funder and conductor of research. Chief Scientific Advisers, Departmental Directors of Analysis, and Analysis Function Heads of Profession have signed up to these principles on the recommendation of the Government Chief Scientific Adviser and National Statistician to ensure consistent and robust approaches to research across all research providers.

This document sets out the scope of activity applicable under the Concordat as well as Defence's approach to implementing the principles.

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Director Analysis

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Preface

How to use this JSP

1. JSP 732 is intended to set out the principles to which all research across Defence should adhere, provide guidance on how to implement these, and state where to seek further advice to maintain the highest standards of research integrity across Defence: including Top Level Budgets (TLBs), the Front Line Commands (FLCs), and the Enabling Organisations (EOs). It is designed to be used by all those involved in research across Defence, including but not limited to internal and external researchers, those supporting researchers, funders of research and sponsors of research. This JSP will be reviewed annually.
2. JSP 732 is intended to build on, and cohere, the existing policies, procedures and best practice relating to research integrity found across Defence. It also aims to make it easier to further develop these policies, procedures and best practice by utilising 'Research Champions' to share best practice and mutually agree approaches. Implementation of this JSP supports the delivery of high quality research, the improved development of capabilities, and the most efficient and effective use of resources. This JSP sets out the requirement to annually report on research integrity, cohered by DST in collaboration with 'Research Champions'.
3. The JSP is structured in two parts:
 - a. Part 1 - Directive, which provides the direction that must be followed in accordance with statute or policy mandated by Defence or on Defence by Central Government.
 - b. Part 2 - Guidance, which provides the guidance and best practice that will assist the user to comply with the directives detailed in Part 1.

Coherence with other Policy and Guidance

4. Where this document contains references to policies, publications and other JSPs which are published by other Functions, these Functions have been consulted in the formulation of the policy and guidance detailed in this publication.

Related JSP	Title
JSP 440	The Defence Manual of Security
JSP 536	Governance of Research Involving Human Participants

Further Advice and Feedback – Contacts

5. The owner of this JSP is the Head of the Analysis Function, with the Ministry of Defence (MOD) Chief Scientific Adviser (CSA), Deputy CSA and Director of Analysis as the named senior members of staff who oversee research integrity. Defence Science and Technology (DST) is the primary point of contact for research integrity across MOD. For further information or advice on any aspect of this publication or to provide feedback, contact:

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1 Introduction and Background

Purpose

1. This JSP sets out the Defence specific requirements and expectations to embed the principles for research integrity throughout MOD and wider Defence. It provides an overarching framework, bringing together existing and new policies in a centralised and coherent manner to provide a comprehensive foundation for research integrity in Defence.
2. Implementation of this JSP will improve and maintain best practice across the Defence research community and provide assurance to the Government Chief Scientific Adviser (GCSA), CSA, Director Analysis, and to the public, on the integrity of all research conducted within the Department in line with the principles set out in the [Concordat to Support Research Integrity](#) ('the Concordat').
3. Research conducted to the highest standards of research integrity will ensure high quality outputs, improve the experiences of Service personnel, ensure value for money, champion high quality research across Government, and help to maintain the reputation of MOD as a key contributor to Defence research.

Background

4. While there is no universal definition of research integrity, it can be considered another name for 'good research practice'. The UK Concordat for research integrity (the Concordat) identifies five principles of research integrity: honesty, rigour, transparency and open communication, care and respect, and, accountability. The UK Research Integrity Office (UKRIO) has set out its own set of principles for research integrity in its [Code of Practice for Research \(UKRIO, 2009\)](#), which it states should ensure that research is honest and accurate, and safeguard research participants and those who undertake research.
5. On the recommendation of the GCSA, departmental CSAs have signed up to the principles of the Concordat for the forms of scientific research undertaken within and for their departments. Similarly, on the recommendation of the National Statistician, Departmental Directors of Analysis (DDANs) and Analysis Function Heads of Profession have signed up to the principles of the Concordat for the forms of research conducted by their professions.
6. In signing up to the principles of the Concordat, CSAs, DDANs and Analysis Function Heads of Profession must demonstrate a commitment to promoting and upholding the principles of reliable and honest research, and each department is required to report annually on progress.
7. Existing professional expectations and standards, such as those set out in the His Majesty's Treasury guidance books and the Government Functional Standard for Analysis, if implemented correctly, will meet many of the principles of the Concordat in part or in whole. This JSP provides additional Defence-specific direction and guidance for the implementation of the principles in addition to existing standards. These additions, motivated by the Research Concordat, will support well-informed decision making, delivering better outcomes and improving the lives of citizens.
8. A robust policy on research integrity is important to ensure that MOD research community is working to the standards required across Government, industry and the academic sector. MOD does not want to be seen as merely meeting a minimum standard,

we want to be seen as leading from the front. Trustworthy research, evidence and advice are fundamentally necessary to ensure that Defence takes informed decisions, that we spend money wisely, support our personnel, and crucially that we continue to develop and maintain public trust.

9. Research integrity, ethical research practices and healthy research cultures are imperative to ensure a diverse and strong knowledge base. This is undermined by research that is of poor quality, is unethical, or is fraudulent, fabricated, or plagiarised. Future research that draws upon flawed knowledge will be similarly flawed, further undermining the credibility of MOD's research community. Similarly, decisions or advice based on flawed knowledge are also detrimental, and expose MOD to operational, legal and financial risks, including risk to life and the security of the nation.

10. The Concordat provides a national framework for good research conduct and its governance. Committing to its principles provides a focus for Government to develop new policies and to review existing policies, ensuring consistent and robust approaches are in place. The five principles are broadly in line with the [Civil Service Code](#) and King's Regulations, so it is expected that all civil servants and Service personnel should already be upholding these values in part.

2 Scope

Definition of Research

11. Noting the variable definitions of research across Defence and Government, for the purposes of this JSP, anything classified as research under the [Frascati Definition of Research and Development \(R&D\)](#) falls in scope. The term research is used more broadly within this JSP to cover both research and experimental development activities, and is therefore not reflective of research as referenced in other policies.

12. Frascati R&D is defined as creative work undertaken on a systematic basis to increase the stock of knowledge, and uses this knowledge for the purposes of developing new products (including improved versions or qualities of existing products) or discovering new or more efficient processes of production.

13. The term R&D covers three types of activity:

- a. **basic research** - experimental or theoretical work undertaken primarily to acquire new knowledge of the underlying foundations of phenomena and observable facts, without any particular application or use in view.
- b. **applied research** - original investigation undertaken in order to acquire new knowledge. It is, however, directed primarily towards a specific, practical aim or objective.
- c. **experimental development** - systematic work, drawing on knowledge gained from research and practical experience and producing additional knowledge, which is directed to producing new products or processes or to improving existing products or processes.

Other Key Definitions

14. For the purpose of this JSP, a **researcher** is any person who conducts research. A researcher may be working independently or as part of a team. This includes Defence employees (who are bound by this JSP), and external individuals in academia and industry (who are bound by their own internal codes of conduct and contractual obligations, which should reflect the requirements of this JSP).

15. **Research Sponsors**¹ are individuals (normally a representative of the organisation with delegated authority for signing off projects) or organisations that take on overall responsibility for proportionate, effective arrangements being in place to set up, run and report a research project. All research must have a research sponsor.

16. **Research Funders** are individuals or organisations that provides funding or joint funding through new or existing budgets or under existing programmes for research.

Projects in Scope

17. Any activities defined as research under the Frascati R&D definition are in scope of this JSP.

18. The key inclusion criteria for research under Frascati R&D are for it to be:

- a. **novel** - to be aimed at new findings.
- b. **creative** - to be based on original, not obvious, concepts and hypotheses.
- c. **uncertain** - to be uncertain about the final outcome.
- d. **systematic** - to be planned and budgeted.
- e. **transferable and/or reproducible** - to lead to results that could be possibly reproduced.

19. For activities that do not fall under Frascati R&D, such as some projects within Defence Experimentation or Innovation, projects should be assessed on a case-by-case basis by the research sponsor to ascertain whether they are in scope. Further support on ascertaining scope is available in Part 2 of this JSP.

20. It is recommended that any activities meeting more than one of the above inclusion criteria are considered to be in scope, including some Operational Analysis/Operational Research, and service or equipment evaluation, improvement, or development activities.

21. It is possible for specific elements of a wider activity, such as work packages or sub-projects, to fall in scope. These in scope elements of work must abide by the principles set out in this JSP, even if the wider project is not considered in scope.

22. Research projects which form part of a department's statement of research and development need as overseen by the departmental CSA are in scope.

23. This JSP must be applied by anyone at all stages and for all disciplines employed by Defence (including Service personnel, MOD civil servants, UK civilians or foreign nationals)

¹ This definition is in alignment with [JSP 536](#).

involved in any research to be conducted in the UK, overseas, or on operations, where the research is to be undertaken, funded, or sponsored either wholly or in part by MOD. This includes, but is not limited to, researchers, those supporting researchers, and funders/sponsors of research. **Any questions on scope should be referred to local research champions in the first instance.**

24. Where MOD or partially MOD-funded research is being conducted within a university or other research institution **which is implementing the Concordat**, it is expected that the requirements set out in this JSP will complement the university or institution's own integrity, ethics and governance processes. Personnel involved in such research arrangements should follow the requirements as set out in this JSP, being mindful of the requirements in the university or institution.

25. Where MOD or partially MOD-funded research is being conducted internationally, or by a UK entity **which is not implementing the Concordat**, it is expected that the principles of research integrity and expected standards should be appropriately set out in formal international agreements, Memoranda of Understanding, Project Agreements, or contracts.

26. The direction and guidance in this policy is for all future research, and for 'current' research to which it can be applied without causing substantive problems to commercial and/or contractual agreements².

Projects out of Scope

27. The Frascati R&D exclusion criteria include:

- a. **product development** - the overall process aimed at bringing a new product to market (excluding the early stage where existing knowledge is tested for novel applications, as this fits the above R&D criteria and is in scope); and
- b. **pre-production development** - non-experimental work on a product or system before it goes into production (when the work is no longer novel, but is focused on the routine development of an integrated system).

28. Activities such as conducting consultations, briefing for ministers or officials which draws upon research and analysis to address a specific information requirement or decision, collection of management information or use of search engines are not considered to fall within the scope of this JSP.

29. Additionally, external research that is used by MOD, but has not been funded, sponsored, or conducted by MOD, is not in scope. Individuals should remain aware of the risks (outlined in paragraph 9) of using outputs which may not meet the same standards set out by MOD.

30. In many cases, the best practice guidance outlined in this JSP can still be applied to projects, programmes and portfolios, even where it is defined as out of scope, and as such it is recommended that relevant aspects of the JSP are applied wherever appropriate.

² For example, it does not apply to multi-study research that is already commissioned and contracted with external suppliers.

3 Research Integrity

31. All those in scope of this JSP are expected to observe and uphold the highest standards of integrity, honesty, and professionalism in respect of their own actions and in their responses to the actions of others. This section outlines the requirements of each of the key principles of research integrity.

Honesty

32. Honesty when proposing, conducting, reporting, and defending research, including in presentation of research goals, intentions, and findings; in reporting on research methods and procedures; in using and acknowledging the work of other researchers; and in conveying valid interpretations and making justifiable claims based on research findings.

33. Research misconduct is characterised as behaviours or actions that fall short of the standards of ethics, research and scholarship required to ensure that the integrity of research is upheld. This includes but is not limited to plagiarism, fabrication of data, or falsification or manipulation of data or analysis. Allegations of research misconduct are rare but if not addressed appropriately, risk causing harm to humans, animals, and the environment, waste resources, undermine MOD's research record, expose MOD to legal risks, and damage the credibility of MOD.

34. If there is a suspicion of research misconduct, the issue must be raised immediately to the area Research Champion, and escalated to the CSA, and/or Dir. Analysis as appropriate. Reports of research misconduct will be treated confidentially and in line with local policies. Work contracted outside of MOD should report concerns immediately to their Defence research sponsor in addition to following their own internal misconduct procedures.

35. Sometimes honest errors or inappropriate research methodologies or interpretations are used out of ignorance. In such cases research misconduct has not taken place, however immediate action should still be taken to report on these errors, and upskill and train the staff responsible to prevent such errors occurring again.

Accountability

36. Accountability of funders, employers, and researchers to collectively create a research environment in which individuals and organisations are empowered and enabled to own the research process. Those engaged with research must also ensure that individuals and organisations are held to account when behaviour falls short of the standards set by this JSP.

37. Implementation of this policy will be directed by Research Champions with the support of DST and the Analysis Function. Research Champions must report on the progress of implementation of this JSP through the MOD Annual Report and Accounts (ARAc) or as a separate publication as appropriate. This will provide assurance as to the effectiveness of implementation and the integrity of Defence research.

38. Heads of Profession are accountable for ensuring that their professions standards and publication requirements are accessible and communicated to all relevant researchers, research sponsors, and research funders.

39. Further details of the responsibilities of senior owners, Research Champions, researchers, and funders and sponsors of research can be found in Section 4.

Rigour

40. Rigour in line with prevailing governmental, profession and departmental standards and policies; in performing research and adopting justifiable methods; and in drawing interpretations and conclusions from the research.

41. Where possible, project methodologies and proposals should be reviewed by independent experts either formally through specific review processes (e.g. Science Advisory Committees), or through peer review (e.g. engagement with independent specialists such as badged analysts or subject matter experts). This will help to ensure that the principles of research integrity have been adequately considered in the early stages of research development and are being met prior to research commencing.

42. Applying topic and profession-specific guidance and standards will, in most cases, be sufficient to adhering to the Concordant in part. This JSP outlines Defence specific guidance on improving research integrity across Defence R&D as a whole across all relevant professional functions.

43. Legal obligations, and compliance with the law, would take precedence over the requirements of the Concordat or this JSP. In the event of a conflict, the area Research Champion should be made aware as to the reason the requirements cannot be met.

44. It is imperative that any research conducted ensures that the principles of diversity and inclusion are adhered to in line with the [Public Sector Equality Duty](#). Increasing inclusivity and the diversity of those conducting, contributing to, or participating in research will bring in more varied perspectives, leading to stronger, more relevant research outcomes. The opportunity to conduct and contribute to research must be open to all and Defence must make an active effort to drive diversity and inclusion.

45. Collaboration and diversity of researchers should be encouraged, both across Defence, and with academia, industry, and international partners where appropriate, to increase diversity of thought and improve research outcomes.

46. All research should adequately consider the diversity of the population the research outputs will impact. In particular, the historic systematic exclusion of biologically female individuals from research has resulted in policies and practices that are based on evidence from biological males that disregards the differences of specific physiology, metabolism, and physical shape. The exclusion of biological females can lead to suboptimal clinical treatments and clinical misdiagnoses, poorly fitting personal protective equipment, and suboptimal training and nutritional policies. In the military, this biological sex data gap can compromise the safety, health, and performance of biological females in the battlespace. There are similar risks to other groups who are underrepresented in research.

47. Any research conducted with human participants must strive to have a sample population that is representative of the population to which the outputs apply where it is legal, ethical, and reasonable to do so. This should include consideration of all protected characteristics as identified in the [Equality Act 2010](#) including, but not limited to, sex, age, race, and religion.

48. Any research conducted with human participants must include a section in their internal reports identifying that their sample population has been suitably diverse, or justification as to why diversity was not necessary to, or possible for, their study.

49. Any commissioned research should include requirements for diversity and inclusion in relevant contracts and documents to ensure compliance with this JSP and the Public Sector Equality Duty.

Care and Respect

50. Care and respect for all participants in research, and for the subjects, users, and beneficiaries of research, including humans, animals, the environment, and cultural objects. Those engaged with research must also show care and respect for the integrity of the research record.

51. Maintaining the highest standards of research integrity requires the right environment. MOD is committed to the ongoing development of a culture that supports and nurtures such standards.

Transparency and Open Communication

52. Transparency and open communication in declaring potential competing interests; in the reporting of research data collection methods; in the scientific analysis and interpretation of data; and in appropriate disclosure for scientific, analytic, and ethical scrutiny, bearing in mind legal and security considerations.

53. MOD must be as open and transparent as possible with publicly funded research, which should be accessible wherever possible, preferably in open access journals, and released promptly and in a way that promotes public trust.

54. When research is conducted, funded, or sponsored, open science principles should be adhered to, as much as is consistent with security considerations, across the entire research lifecycle. While there is no formal agreed set of open science principles across all of research, they are generally about increasing the rigour, accountability, and reproducibility of research, as well as working to promote inclusion, collaboration, and information-sharing.

55. It is hoped that by, when possible, embracing open science principles and independent peer review, this will help to reduce bias, improve the quality and provide assurance of research outputs, improve transparency, and foster greater public confidence in the work of Government.

56. All researchers must consider the dissemination of their research both within and outside of Defence and Government, in line with internal policies and procedures where relevant.

57. All research conducted, funded, or sponsored by MOD should aim by default to be shared externally and at the earliest appropriate point to maximise transparency, accessibility, and value for money **inasmuch as such actions are consistent with security considerations**. This should be in accordance with permission to publish policies and with all relevant professional standards, such as the [Government Social Research Publication Protocol](#). External sharing of research could be via academic publication or release on GOV.UK.

58. **However, neither the Concordat nor this JSP supersede UK law.** In the event that transparency requirements under the Concordat or this JSP are inconsistent with UK law, compliance with the law will have priority. Relevant statutes, areas of law and legal obligations include: the Official Secrets Acts 1911 and 1989, the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and the Constitutional Reform and Governance Act 2010; Intellectual Property law; and contractual obligations of the Ministry of Defence. Where inconsistencies with the law are identified, or the application of the law is uncertain, seek legal advice.

59. Other reasons why it may not be possible to publish research conducted, funded, or sponsored by MOD include but are not limited to:

- a. security or national security considerations or restrictions, often reflected by the classification of the research.
- b. commercial confidentiality.
- c. non-disclosure agreements.
- d. ongoing investigations or legal proceedings.
- e. where the research relates to the formulation or development of internal Government policy.
- f. data-sharing limitations or constraints associated with sharing research securely including ensuring value for money.

60. Where external publication of research is not possible due to the reasons given above, **MOD must document the reasons internally.** In addition to documenting the reasons for restricting publication, the research should still be made available to the largest community possible. As a minimum, MOD must ensure that there is a record of research having been conducted on appropriate internal databases, subject to security considerations, justifying the level of access we allow.

61. Maintenance of good records management standards, and integration into existing systems where possible, is essential so that the research can be retrieved and reused or referenced across Defence. This will ensure better value for money, prevent duplication of research, and increase transparency where appropriate.

62. To facilitate both successful external or internal dissemination of research, MOD has previously mandated that all MOD funded research proposals include a research publication strategy that contains, as appropriate: a commitment to publish research externally and whether this will be open access, how publication will be resourced in terms of cost and time for write up and publication administration, internal publication plans, and an explanation for why internal and/or external publication is not possible.

Security

63. In addition to the five core principles of research integrity, security is an essential consideration for research in Defence. It should be considered an important requirement in observing and upholding the highest standards of integrity, honesty and professionalism for Defence research.

64. The nature of Defence research necessitates ensuring sensitive areas are protected from the risk of loss or compromise and to prevent them from being used in a way that threatens the UK's national security or goes against the UK's values.

65. A failure to appropriately consider and follow security policy requirements to protect against these risks should be seen as a failure to uphold the highest standards of integrity and professionalism for Defence research.

66. This means all research activity conducted in a university or other research institution, when funded in part or full by MOD, is subject to additional security requirements to protect against loss or compromise. The application of appropriate security controls ensures that research outputs remain as open as possible but as secure as necessary to protect the UK's Defence and Security.

67. Therefore, all researchers must abide by the security requirements set out in the [UK Government Functional Standard for Security, GovS007](#). Defence personnel are also bound by additional security conditions detailed within JSP 440, The Defence Manual of Security. Such security requirements must be documented at the start of a research activity and periodically reviewed to ensure that they are still suitable throughout the duration of the research with adjustments made as necessary.

68. MOD research sponsors and research funders must ensure that defence suppliers understand and comply with the obligations placed upon them for the protection of the information, data and other assets they are given access to, and for the assets that will be generated, when contracted to conduct Defence research. This includes when universities and other research institutions are contracted.

69. Research sponsors and research funders should share key resources such as the National Protective Security Authority's (NPSA's) [Trusted Research](#) campaign and the [Research Collaboration Advice Team \(RCAT\)](#) to help research organisations understand how to engage in secure collaborations, meet regulatory requirements, and protect their research.

70. Defence and Government information, data and assets will carry a security classification that will ensure that the research is protected appropriately. All researchers should ensure they understand the classification and grading of the research they are conducting, and the associated information assets, and comply with all applicable relevant policy and handling instructions to ensure the research is appropriately protected relative to its level of sensitivity. Further information may be found within the [UK Government Security Classification Policy](#).

4 Responsibilities

71. In line with Commitment 3 of the Concordat³, all those involved in research which is in scope of this JSP have a responsibility to embed a culture that encourages good practice and supports knowledge sharing on the subject of research integrity, including through the undertaking of relevant training.

³ A commitment to supporting a research environment that is underpinned by a culture of integrity and based on good governance, best practice and support for the development of researchers.

Responsibilities of MOD CSA and Director of Analysis

72. MOD CSA and Director of Analysis will provide direction on research integrity and will hold the department to account. They will work with Research Champions to identify and develop research integrity best practice, and seek opportunities to share this through external engagement.

73. MOD CSA and Director of Analysis will work together with Research Champions to strengthen the integrity of research and regularly and openly review progress of research integrity, in their areas and across the department, through the Defence Technology Innovation Board (DTIB), as per commitment 5 of the Concordat⁴.

Responsibilities of DST

74. DST are the primary point of contact on research integrity. They facilitate the Research Champion network and support the development, communication, or implementation of the policy where necessary.

75. DST are responsible for collating data from the Research Champions and for producing and submitting the ARAc and internal annual report.

76. DST, supported by other business areas across Defence, must designate appropriate Research Champions, as explained below.

77. A list of Research Champions will be held and maintained by DST.

Responsibilities of Research Champions

78. Research Champions are sufficiently senior (suggested Deputy Director or equivalent) representatives for each business area or organisation within Defence. They are responsible for supporting their areas to embed the principles of research integrity to help provide assurance that the research conducted, sponsored, or funded by their area meets the principles set out in this JSP, and to act accordingly where it does not.

79. Research Champions are expected to promote and embed research integrity within their area in line with the direction set by CSA and Director of Analysis, and are responsible for providing assurance that the research conducted, sponsored, or funded by their area meets the principles set out in this JSP through annual reporting.

80. Research Champions must support those in scope of this JSP under their designated area to deliver their research in line with the principles of research integrity.

81. Research Champions should understand the threats facing Defence research for their area and model and promote a security aware mindset. They should also understand where to direct researchers locally for further guidance and support on research security.

⁴ A commitment to work together to strengthen the integrity of research and to reviewing progress regularly and openly.

82. Research Champions must be aware of the appropriate systems for allegations of research misconduct that are in place in their area, as per Commitment 4 of the Concordat⁵, and direct potential cases of research misconduct through appropriate channels.

83. Research Champions are expected to escalate concerns that they identify, or are made aware of, outside of their area, including any MOD funded or sponsored research.

Responsibilities of Researchers, those Supporting Researchers and Funders/Sponsors of Research

84. All researchers, those supporting researchers and funders/sponsors of research are responsible for ensuring their research is conducted, funded or sponsored in line with the principles of research integrity.

85. All researchers, those supporting researchers and funders/sponsors of research are responsible for ensuring their research is appropriately inclusive.

86. All researchers, those supporting researchers and funders/sponsors of research are responsible for ensuring their research is secure and in line with appropriate security policies alongside any other relevant JSPs, law or frameworks.

87. All researchers, those supporting researchers and funders/sponsors of research are responsible for classifying their research appropriately and considering the potential implication and applications of their research in the long term when doing so.

⁵ A commitment to use transparent, timely, robust, and fair processes to deal with allegations of research misconduct when they arise.