



Ministry
of Defence

Annual Statement of
Compliance with the
Concordat to Support
Research Integrity
(2025-2026)

Key Contact Information

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Introduction

The Ministry of Defence (MOD) is dedicated to upholding the highest standards of research integrity by ensuring that all research conducted, sponsored, or funded by Defence adheres to the principles outlined in the Concordat to Support Research Integrity, fostering transparency and openness to make publicly funded research accessible whenever possible. Defence continues to benefit from the largest sustained increase in spending since the Cold War, with Defence investment set to reach 2.5% of GDP. This funding supports cutting-edge research and development across a range of areas, including artificial intelligence and autonomous systems.

In 2025-2026, the MOD built on its commitment to research integrity by publishing JSP 732 Part 2 externally, following its internal release in 2024-2025. This publication enabled wider access to the detailed guidance it provides on supporting the implementation of research integrity principles and governance within Defence, ensuring transparency and accessibility, and supporting researchers in upholding ethical standards and promoting accountability in all Defence research activities.

By outlining practical measures to implement the research integrity principles and responsibilities established in Part 1, the external publication of Part 2 enhances transparency and reinforces the MOD's dedication to fostering a robust and accountable research culture across Defence. This development further supports the consistent application of research integrity principles and strengthens the alignment of Defence research practices with national and international standards.

Established in 2022, the Research Integrity Champions network continues to play a vital role in supporting the implementation of research integrity principles across Defence. Comprising senior representatives from various areas of the organisation, the Research Integrity Champions meet tri-annually to exchange best practices, provide practical guidance, and ensure compliance with JSP 732. Through these regular meetings and reporting cycles, the network maintains a continuous focus on research integrity, fostering a culture of accountability, improvement, and alignment with the MOD's strategic goals.

Research Integrity Champions, together with all members of the organisation, are supported to participate in learning and development opportunities, such as subscriber-exclusive UKRIO courses, and to work collaboratively in addressing challenges in research integrity. They are empowered to uphold the principles of JSP 732 by identifying and addressing instances of misconduct, thereby enhancing the quality, ethical standards, and accountability of Defence research. Acting as a key first point of contact for researchers, Research Integrity Champions provide guidance on research integrity matters, promote awareness of relevant systems and processes, and ensure colleagues are equipped to navigate integrity-related challenges effectively.

The success of the network highlights its ongoing importance in maintaining the highest standards of research integrity across the organisation.

The MOD is a subscriber of the UK Research Integrity Office (UKRIO), an independent charity that provides guidance, training, and advisory services to promote and further good research practice. The MOD upgraded its subscription in 2024 to cover the entire department, extending access to expert training, webinars, and roundtable discussions. This has provided MOD staff with opportunities to undergo targeted training, address specific cases of potential misconduct with expert advice, and implement best practices more effectively across Defence. The MOD plans to continue

this subscription in 2026 to further support its research culture.

The MOD recognises the importance of transparency and openness in publicly funded research. In line with JSP 732, the MOD has worked to ensure that research is free to access wherever possible, while balancing security considerations. Research outputs are published through GOV.UK, Defence Science and Technology Laboratory (Dstl) publications, and open-access academic platforms where appropriate, ensuring that publicly funded findings are accessible to the widest possible audience. These publication practices sit alongside ongoing work to embed open-science principles including rigour, accountability, and reproducibility across the research lifecycle.

Achievements in FY 2025-2026

During 2025–2026, alongside the publication of JSP 732 Part 2, the MOD continued to demonstrate high standards in research integrity, with Research Integrity Champions across Defence showing ongoing commitment to the Concordat principles and further embedding JSP 732 throughout the research system.

Substantial volumes of research outputs were subject to proportionate internal quality assurance. Over 470 research outputs delivered during the year underwent documented internal review, with over 97% compliance against established review requirements, including appropriately recorded exemptions. Where outputs were identified as not having met review requirements, corrective action was taken prior to delivery.

Formal scientific and ethical oversight continued through established Defence governance routes. During the year, more than 50 research protocols underwent independent committee scrutiny, including scientific advisory and formal ethics review where required. Research involving human participation was reported as receiving appropriate ethical review through recognised Defence and external ethics processes. The establishment of a new Technical Excellence capability in Dstl to embed research integrity,

ethics and technical quality as core organisational functions was an important development during the year, with work underway to strengthen policy, research sponsorship arrangements and contractual expectations.

Defence supported transparency and external challenge where consistent with security and sensitivity. Over 1,100 research reports were added to Defence knowledge systems during the year. Although Defence does not currently track a single metric for external peer review across the whole organisation, around 95 academic publications have been independently reviewed and published externally, demonstrating external scrutiny.

Research integrity is a cornerstone of the MOD's commitment to supporting the objectives of Defence Reform, as outlined in initiatives such as the Strategic Defence Review and Defence Industrial Strategy. These reforms emphasise the importance of modernisation, innovation, and the effective use of resources to address evolving threats and maintain the UK's strategic advantage. By embedding the principles of research integrity, as set out in JSP 732, the MOD ensures that its research is conducted with transparency, accountability, and ethical rigour, supporting the credibility, reliability, and impact of Defence research and development. Through robust governance frameworks, targeted training programmes, and partnerships with organisations such as UKRIO, the MOD is equipping its researchers with the tools and knowledge needed to uphold the highest standards of research integrity. These efforts ensure that Defence research continues to align with global best practices, supporting the MOD's mission to deliver innovative, ethical, and impactful research that underpins the UK's national security and defence capabilities. By embedding research integrity into its practices, the MOD is directly contributing to the broader goals of Defence Reform by increasing integration, reducing duplication, and improving delivery – ensuring that research and development remain at the heart of a modern, agile, and effective Defence organisation.

Addressing Research Misconduct

The MOD is committed to maintaining a culture that supports the highest standards of research integrity. Research misconduct is defined as behaviours or actions that fall short of the ethical and scholarly standards required to uphold research integrity.

Recognising the unique security environment within which the MOD operates, disclosures will be managed on a strict 'need to know' basis, and requests for confidentiality or anonymity will be respected wherever possible, consistent with safeguarding national security and legal obligations. MOD did not undertake any formal research misconduct investigations in financial year 2024-2025, and has only continued to strengthen its systems for addressing research misconduct, which includes:

- Clear policies for confidential reporting of allegations.
- Referenceable procedures for investigating and resolving cases of misconduct.
- Training and support for researchers to address honest errors or differences in methodology.

The Ministry of Defence Research Ethics Committee (MODREC) continues to oversee research involving human participation, ensuring that ethical standards are upheld.

Plans for the Future

Looking ahead to the next Financial Year, the MOD will:

- Continue to embed the principles of research integrity across all research activities. This will be done in part by reviewing the current distribution of our network, ensuring it remains effective, aligned with our objectives, and identifying any gaps or areas for improvement. The review will also help confirm that the right coverage and support are in place to uphold the highest standards of research integrity across Defence.
- Strengthen collaboration with external partners, such as UKRIO, to drive innovation, share best practices, and set new benchmarks for excellence in research integrity.
- Continue to promote open science principles, ensuring that publicly funded research is accessible and transparent, while maintaining security considerations.
- Build on lessons learned internally, from other organisations, and departments to refine and improve Defence research practices.
- Enhance and communicate the training and resources available on research integrity.