

ST GEORGE`S, UNIVERSITY OF LONDON

CODE OF PRACTICE FOR RESEARCH

Introduction

Context

This Code of Practice for Research at St George's University of London (SGUL) defines the policies and requirements in relation to research integrity, to ensure that research is conducted to the highest standards. All students at the university, members of staff employed by SGUL, and other researchers using University facilities or with University honorary contracts are expected to work to the requirements set out in this Code of Practice.

SGUL is strongly committed to excellence in research and has embedded the commitments set out in [The Concordat to Support Research Integrity 2019](#). SGUL believes that research integrity is fundamental to good quality research and the University has the policies, processes, governance procedures and the culture to advance and ensure research integrity across SGUL

The Code of Practice covers the following areas:

- I. Responsible research practice
 1. Research Integrity and Culture
 2. Professional Development
 3. Funding
 4. Research Data
 5. Publications and Open Access
 6. Research Dissemination
 7. Research Assessment
 8. Intellectual Property
 9. Conflicts of Interest
 10. Research Ethics Review
- II. Dealing with allegations of research misconduct

I. Responsible research practice

1. *Research integrity and research culture*

Researchers should be committed to maintaining scientific integrity in their research.

which means:

- Honesty
- Rigour
- Transparency and open communications
- Care and respect
- Accountability to the University and society
- Awareness and compliance with of contractual obligations, and all relevant national and institutional regulations

This code applies to research which SGUL conducts in the UK and international locations.

These elements apply to the whole research life circle, including the planning, conducting and dissemination of the research.

The University has identified a named senior member and a member of staff to oversee Research Integrity. The named staff member is the first point of contact for anyone who wanting more information on matters of research integrity.

The **Named senior member:** [Professor Jonathan Friedland](#), Deputy Principal (Research and Enterprise).

Named staff member: [Research Ethics and Integrity Officer](#), and queries should be directed to Angelika in the first instance.

2. Professional Development and Training

The University is committed to the [Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers \(2019\)](#) and ensures that a stimulating and safe research environment is provided, including the provision of appropriate training, equipment, working conditions, facilities and opportunities, and encourages collaboration through research networks. The University was awarded the [HR Excellence in Research Award](#) in November 2013, which was retained in 2020, demonstrating our long-term commitment to the career development and working conditions of researchers.

Researchers at all career stages should seek to continually learn by regularly updating and enhancing their skills and competencies. The University's [personal development review policy](#) supports staff to agree goals, identify learning and development needs and discuss career aspirations and development. All employees should take part in a PDR meeting annually with their line manager. Line Managers should conduct PDRs in accordance with [SGUL's Personal Development Review planning and preparation for Managers](#).

Promoting training and development opportunities

- 10 days professional development pro-rata per year are recommended by the University
- ***St George's Coaching and Mentoring programmes***

St George's [coaching programme](#) offers members of staff the opportunity to access coaching from a trained internal or external coach. St George's [mentoring programme](#) offers members of staff the opportunity to work with an internal mentor over an agreed period of time. Both are valuable in enabling researchers to improve working relationships, enhance their performance, develop capability and manage their career. These development methods also enable researchers to transfer their learning back into the workplace. Coaching or mentoring partnerships aim to complement rather than replace the support of a line manager.

- ***The University is committed to providing a wide range of centralised professional development courses and programmes for all staff***

The [Timetable](#) can be downloaded from the SGUL website, covering leadership and management; soft skills; mental health and wellbeing; diversity and inclusion; appraisals and generic job skills.

[Vitae](#) which supports the professional development of researchers, also offers [online career and professional development training](#).

- [The George's Academic Training](#) team run a series of research training seminars aimed at St George's staff called ResearchAware. Each stand-alone session introduces skills and considerations for healthcare research involvement.
- ***Training on research ethics and research integrity***

The University provides training for researchers in research integrity and ethics to promote awareness of the relevant codes and regulations. The Research Ethics and Integrity Officer gives research integrity presentations on welcoming days for new staff, and seminars for different groups in the Research Institutes. Research ethics and integrity [training is available upon request](#). SGUL has clear policies to support researchers accessible [through the website](#). The University participates in an annual monitoring exercise to demonstrate that the institution has met the commitment of the concordat. The SGUL annual statement on [Research Integrity](#) (approved by the University Council) and [annual work of the Research Ethics Committee](#) is available on the website.

3. Research funding

- Joint Research and Enterprise Services (JRES) supports researchers in the development, due diligence, costing and approval of research grant applications. Most research grant applications require an institutional approval, and this needs to come from JRES for St George's University and Trust. It is a requirement of both St George's University and Trust that all research grant applications are authorised by JRES before their submission to the research funding body – whether or not the funder needs this approval.
- [Researchers should follow St George's application process and timelines for grant applications.](#)
- Researchers have a responsibility to familiarise themselves with the terms and conditions of any funding agreement (grant or contract and whether from public, government funding bodies, industry or other), to ensure that they fully understand the implications of those terms and what they need to do to ensure compliance with their obligations (such as report submission and publication procedures).

- Where there is more than one funder for any project, researchers need to advise JRES and ensure that they have necessary approvals from funders. Normally funders need to be made aware and consent to any other funding received for the same piece of research.
- Researchers should adhere to SGUL [Financial Regulations and Procedures](#) including those related to purchasing or procurement of materials, equipment or other resources for research, the hiring of research project staff and expenses. Researchers should use and manage financial resources responsibly and sustainably, and in accordance with the terms and conditions of the funding body and the financial regulations of the University, and co-operate with any financial monitoring and audit. Any concerns, irregularities or events should be reported to JRES as soon as they become apparent.
- [JRES Research Funding Officers](#) can help with any research funding queries.

4. Data management

- Researchers should ensure that research data is managed and curated effectively throughout its lifecycle in accordance with the [SGUL Research Data Management Policy](#). Research proposals should include a data management plan that considers data collection, storage, security, documentation, discoverability, reuse, sharing, retention and preservation.
- Researchers are encouraged to use [DMP Online](#) to develop their data management plan.
- Please see further information on our [Advice on data management webpage](#)
- **There are several related policies which may also help:**
 - [Data protection](#)
 - [Data quality](#)
 - [Record management](#)
 - [Freedom of information](#)
 - [Information governance framework](#)
 - [Information management](#)
 - [Information literacy](#)

[Removable media](#)

[Retention and disposal](#)

[Cloud computing policy](#)

5. Publications and open access

- SGUL sets out expectations of researchers in [St. George's Research Publication Policy](#) which is reviewed on a regular basis. Contacts, guidance and training are available via our webpages (links below).
- In summary, researchers should ensure they keep an up to date record of their publications in SGUL's Current Research Information System (CRIS), and upload publications as required by funders and SGUL in accordance with this policy.
- Funder requirements with regard to funder and grant acknowledgement and Creative Commons licences should be observed.
- To facilitate identification of the research with the institution, researchers' affiliation with SGUL and/or St George's University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust, should be included for all published research.
- To facilitate identification of the researcher with the publication, and their contribution to it, researchers should use their ORCID ID and standard terms such as those set out in the CASRAI [Contributor Roles Taxonomy](#) (CRediT).
- The International Committee of Medical Journal Editors has [Recommendations for the Conduct, Reporting, Editing, and Publication of Scholarly work in Medical Journals report](#) and specifically has the section [Defining the Role of Authors and Contributors](#).
- Please also see [advice on using CRIS and SORA](#) and [advice on funding sources or fee waivers for open access publishing](#)
- **There are several related policies which may also help:**
 - [Research Data Management](#)
 - [Intellectual Property Policy](#)
 - [Clinical Trial Transparency policy](#)
 - [Service Level Agreement for the Image Resource Facility, SGUL](#)

[Cris and Sora](#)

[Open access publishing](#)

6. Research dissemination

Researchers should ensure that their research activities are made known to wider society in such a way that they can be understood by non-specialists, therefore improving the public's understanding of science.

- Please see [Advice on research dissemination](#)
- Please also see - [Communication advice for staff](#)

7. Research Assessment

The university signed the [San Francisco Declaration on Research Assessment](#) (DORA) in 2018. This signalled SGUL's commitment to assess research on its own merits, and to support researchers in evidencing the full range of their contributions to scientific research on CVs and promotions applications.

- Please see [advice on responsible research assessment](#)
- Related policy - [Responsible research assessment](#)

8. Intellectual Property

The [Intellectual Property Policy](#) covers the management and exploitation of all intellectual property (IP) created through employment of SGUL and that created by students.

The policy relates to all types of IP including but not limited to inventions, copyright material, patents, design rights, trademarks and database rights.

Ownership & Management of SGUL IP:

- The protection and commercialisation of all SGUL IP is managed by the [JRES Enterprise & Innovation team](#).
- All forms of IP generated by a member of staff, made in the course of their normal duties is owned by the University whether developed on the premises or elsewhere.
- Notwithstanding the above, all staff are required to assign their IP rights to SGUL as part of the standard due-diligence.
- Researchers should consider the potential value of any results of research and contact the Enterprise & Innovation team before any publication (disclosure), whether verbal or written, if there is potential for commercial exploitation.
- Failure to declare an invention prior to disclosure may inhibit opportunities for commercialisation and further impact generation.
- Proceeds of successful commercialisation is shared with the creators of the invention, as contained in the [SGUL Intellectual Property Policy](#).
- Details of student IP management are also contained in the SGUL Intellectual Property Policy.

9. Conflict of Interest

St George's University of London is committed to manage its business with openness and transparency. All staff and students are required to carry out activities in compliance with the [SGUL Conflicts of Interest and Financial Dealings policy](#).

10. Research Ethics review

General principles:

Researchers should adhere to the ethical principles and standards in all research that involves, humans, animals or datasets:

- respect for the person - all participants in research must take part voluntarily, their rights, dignity and autonomy should be respected
- justice - the ethical obligation to distribute the benefits and burdens of research fairly
- beneficence - maximise the benefit of the research and minimise potential risk of harm, assessment of the risks and benefits
- confidentiality – appropriate treatment of information that an individual has disclosed; data management according to University policies
- informed consent – the participant is given appropriate information in a comprehensible manner about the research
- relevant favourable ethics opinion – research proposals must be submitted for ethics review/approval as well as to all other applicable bodies for approval, e.g. regulatory authorities and receive such approval before the research commences.

UK Non-clinical studies and International studies

- The St George's Research Ethics Committee (SGREC) ethically reviews research that is being led by St George's University London students or staff (conducting research as part of their course or job) or research which involves St George's University London students, staff, data, or research with other organisations and international studies.
- The Research ethics and integrity officer will register the service evaluation and clinical audit, and projects with human tissues (if project already has ethical review in place).
- Advice on non-clinical research studies and international clinical studies ethical review, service evaluation and clinical audit can be accessed [here](#).
- Details and guidance are available on the [website](#):
 - “which ethics Committee to apply to”
 - information on research ethics review process in SGUL
 - templates for the St George's Research Ethics Committee (SGREC) ethics application (non-clinical studies)
 - SGREC meeting dates, submission deadlines
 - [Policies on SGREC policies, procedures](#)

| Which ethics Committee to apply to? | | Researcher | | |
|-------------------------------------|---|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|--|
| | | SGUL Students | SGUL Staff | St George's Hospital Trust Staff |
| Participant or Data | SGUL Students | SGREC | SGREC | SGREC |
| | SGUL Staff | SGREC | SGREC | SGREC |
| | SGUL Animals | AWERB | AWERB | AWERB |
| | St George's Hospital Trust / Other NHS Site Staff Recruited through NHS | SGREC + HRA | SGREC + HRA | SGREC + HRA |
| | St George's Hospital Trust / Other NHS Site Staff Not recruited through NHS | SGREC | SGREC | SGREC |
| | Other Organisation including Kingston University | SGREC + Other Organisation's Process | SGREC + Other Organisation's Process | SGREC + HRA + Other Organisation's Process |

SGREC - St George's Research Ethics Committee; AWERB - Animal Welfare Ethical Review Body; HRA - Health Research Authority

Clinical studies in the UK

Clinical studies when research involving human participants, human tissue or remains; clinical trials (drug and device) falling under UK legislation, and EU legislation (if EU states are involved).

Most clinical research requires ethics opinion from a research ethics committee (NHS REC). Health Research Authority (HRA) approval is also needed if the study involves NHS patients, staff, resources or facilities. Trials involving drugs or medical devices may also need approval from the regulatory authority (MHRA). Guidance on the approvals needed for different types of research can be found here [Health Research Authority](#).

Studies must be conducted in compliance with the approved study protocol and all legislation relevant to the type of study/trial, such as (but not limited to) the [UK Data Protection Act \(2018\)](#), the [UK Policy Framework for Health and Social Care Research 2017](#), [UK Clinical Trial Regulations](#), [UK Medical Device Regulations](#) and the [Human Tissue Act 2004](#).

If the research site(s) is/are located outside of the UK, the study will be conducted in compliance with SGREC ethics review (if applicable) and all local ethical, regulatory and legal requirements for the country/countries where the research is taking place.

Further University guidance:

- [Clinical Trial Transparency](#)
- [Research-related SOPs/Templates](#)
- [Human tissue Act](#)
- [JRES Contacts](#)
- [Advice with clinical research studies ethical review](#)
- [International research studies sponsored by SGUL](#)
- [Research ethics for projects which involve human tissue samples](#)

II. Dealing with allegations of research misconduct and other concerns

Research misconduct

The University has transparent, timely, robust and fair processes to deal with allegations of research misconduct.

Researchers should be aware of the types of research misconduct outlined in the [SGUL policy and procedure for investigating and resolving allegations of misconduct](#) in academic research. If upheld, the alleged misconduct may be subject to the relevant staff or student disciplinary processes.

Other concerns

The University has a **number of processes** to deal with complaints of researchers These include:

- [Grievance policy](#) - Providing employees with access to a procedure to help resolve any grievances relating to their employment fairly and without unreasonable delay. It deals with grievance matters may include terms and conditions of employment; health and safety; work relations; bullying and harassment; new working practices; working environment; organisational change; and discrimination.
- [Dignity at study](#) - this policy is to assist in developing and encouraging a learning environment in which harassment is known to be unacceptable and where students have the confidence to deal with harassment without fear of ridicule or reprisals.
- [Dignity at work](#) - the policy may be useful if employees feel that they have been a victim of discrimination, harassment or bullying or wish to report an incident of discrimination, bullying or harassment involving other people.
- [Student concern and complaints](#) - provides a framework in which students can raise matters to assist the University in maintaining high levels of academic and support provision.