

Annual Summary on Research Integrity 2023 – 2024

Introduction

In compliance with the Research Integrity procedures for Investigating Research Misconduct the following report provides an Annual Summary on research integrity allegations for 2023 -2024. The report includes information on:

- Number and type of notifications received by School;
- Outcomes of investigations of any type by School;
- Who the Named Person was for each investigation of any type;
- Status of any cases (completed or in progress).

Summary

During the reporting period three allegations were received by the Research Engagement Directorate, to whom all allegations of research misconduct are reported to (*see Annex 1 - Summary information on investigations of research misconduct that have been undertaken*). Two of the allegations received were in relation to alleged case of plagiarism, one in the School of Social Sciences (SoSS) and the second in the School of Energy, Geoscience, Infrastructure and Society (EGIS).

The third allegation was of research misconduct in relation to wrongful claims of authorship, by academic colleagues, in the School Engineering & Physical Sciences (EPS).

Professor Steve McLaughlin, in his capacity as Deputy Principal for Research and Impact, as the named person, oversaw investigations into the three allegations.

Outcome

In the reported cases concerning the allegation of plagiarism, both reports were received from the supervisors of PhD Students, relating to plagiarism within first year reports produced by the students concerned.

In relation to the first case, and to help establish facts, Professor McLaughlin met with the student as part of his initial consideration of the allegation, in accordance with the Research Integrity Procedures (section 7.1). Following this meeting and considering further evidence presented by the student, it was deemed that there had been errors of judgement made in the use of Chat GPT and the allegation did not warrant a formal consideration under the Research Integrity Procedures. Recommendations were made to the School to address issues raised in relation to supervision of the student and also to ensure the student in question received training and support on the use of Generative AI.

In relation to the second case of plagiarism, after considerable security of materials and evidence from the complainant, in accordance with the Research Integrity Procedures (section 7.1), Professor McLaughlin initiated a screening panel to consider the allegations. Following this formal consideration of the allegation, and on the advice of the Screening Panel, an Investigation Panel was convened and the report from this panel is currently under consideration.

The third research misconduct case involved an allegation by a PDRA disputing the claims of authorship, of several manuscripts, by three academic colleagues. Professor McLaughlin undertook an initial consideration of the case, which included initiating an independent review to help clarify the issues of authorship, and determined that there was insufficient evidence that any actions could constitute research misconduct as specified under Section 3.1.2 (v) of the 'Research Integrity Procedures for Investigating Research Misconduct'; *'misrepresentation of involvement, such as inappropriate claims to authorship, and/or attribution of work where, there has been no significant contribution'*. This conclusion led to a dismissal of the allegation.

Conclusion

The status of two of the reported cases are now determined to be completed. The third case remains outstanding at the time of reporting.

Annex A: Summary information on investigations of research misconduct that have been undertaken

Type of Allegation	Reported to organisations	Number of Screening Panels Convened	Number of Investigation Panels Convened	Named Person	Status
Fabrication					
Falsification					
Plagiarism	2	1	1	Professor Steve McLaughlin	1 Completed 1 Outstanding
Misrepresentation	1	0	0	Professor Steve McLaughlin	Completed
Breach of duty of care					
Improper dealing with allegations of misconduct					
Other					