Annual Statement on Research Integrity

If you have any questions about this template, please contact: RIsecretariat@universitiesuk.ac.uk.

Section 1: Key contact information

Question	Response
1A. Name of organisation	Royal College of Music
1B. Type of organisation: **higher education institution/industry/independent research performing organisation/other (please state)**	Conservatoire
1C. Date statement approved by governing body (DD/MM/YY)	
1D. Web address of organisation's research integrity page (if applicable)	www.rcm.ac.uk/research
1E. Named senior member of staff to oversee research integrity	Name: Robert Adlington (Head of Research and Doctoral Programmes)
	Email address: robert.adlington@rcm.ac.uk
1F. Named member of staff who will act as a first point of contact for anyone wanting more information on matters of research integrity	Name: Emma Hewett (Research and Knowledge Exchange Manager)
	Email address: emma.hewett@rcm.ac.uk

Section 2: Promoting high standards of research integrity and positive research culture. Description of actions and activities undertaken

2A. Description of current systems and culture

Please describe how the organisation maintains high standards of research integrity and promotes positive research culture. It should include information on the support provided to researchers to understand standards, values and behaviours, such as training, support and guidance for researchers at different career stages/ disciplines. You may find it helpful to consider the following broad headings:

- Policies and systems
- Communications and engagement
- Culture, development and leadership
- Monitoring and reporting

Royal College of Music became a signatory to the Concordat to Support Research Integrity in 2019. Research integrity is supported by policies embodied in several different institutional documents. The **RCM Research Strategy 2020-27** commits to an inclusive research environment in which all members of staff (whether employed to undertake research or not) are given support for research activity; mentoring is offered for research staff at every career stage; the treatment of postgraduate research students as peers; the principles of open research; ethical conduct; supporting diversity in research through accommodation of different circumstances and needs. The **RCM Research Ethics Policy** underscores the principles of the Concordat and offers guidance on the process for requesting ethics approval from the RCM Research Ethics Committee or, where relevant, the CUK (Conservatoires UK) Research Ethics Committee. The **RCM Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy** lays out the values and principles that govern all activity at the College, notably the expectation that difference is recognised and celebrated, and that every member of the College community is supported to achieve their full potential. The **Research Degrees Handbook**, updated annually, provides a comprehensive outline of the training and support offered to research students, both within and beyond the College, and highlights the importance of research ethics. The **RCM Sustainability Strategy 2023-2035** ensures that the minimising of environmental impact is at the heart of all College decision-making, and that 'sustainability in teaching and research' and 'support music, culture, and diversity' are key objectives across our work. The **RCM Data Management (Retention) Policy** ensures that data retention across the College's different departments is managed according to best practice and in line with government legislation. The RCM's **Staff**

Disciplinary Procedure governs the investigation of reported cases of research misconduct. Any staff member or student may report suspected cases of misconduct according to the guidance offered in the RCM's **Whistleblowing Policy and Procedure**.

The implementation of these policies in relation to research is the responsibility of a number of committees and administrative positions. The **Research and Knowledge Exchange Committee** is attended by a representative cross-section of researchers and research support staff from across College; its primary function is to ensure a flourishing, healthy and ethical research culture. The **Research Degrees Committee** is attended by a representative selection of staff involved in doctoral supervision plus the doctoral student representatives; it monitors student progress and is a primary forum for student feedback. The **Research Ethics Committee** considers applications for ethical approval for non-externally-funded student and staff research projects, and guides policy on wider matters of research ethics. The **Knowledge Exchange Working Group** brings together staff with a shared interest in engaging with communities and organisations external to the College, in order to ensure integrated engagement strategies.

The **Head of Research and Doctoral Programmes** leads on strategy and governance for research and research degrees across the College; he chairs the Research and Knowledge Exchange Committee and the Research Degrees Committee. The **Doctoral Programmes Coordinator** oversees key elements of the research degrees programme, including research training, student progress monitoring, pastoral matters and community-building. The **Research and Knowledge Exchange Manager** supports the Head of Research in matters of research strategy and has primary responsibility for the development and visibility of knowledge exchange activity at the College. The **Research Data Officer** maintains the College's research repository RCM Research Online and has responsibility for revising and updating the College's policies on Open Access and research data management. The **Research Finance Officer** ensures general compliance with funder and institutional requirements through robust and transparent management and handling of pre and post award research finances, including drawing up research and knowledge exchange contracts and collaboration agreements. The **Research Projects Administrator** assists the **Research Finance Officer and the Research and Knowledge Exchange Manager** with the monitoring of internal and external research and knowledge exchange allocations, and is Secretary to the Research Ethics Committee.

2B. Changes and developments during the period under review

Please provide an update on any changes made during the period, such as new

initiatives, training, developments, also ongoing changes that are still underway. Drawing on Commitment 3 of the Concordat, please note any new or revised policies, practices and procedures to support researchers; training on research ethics and research integrity; training and mentoring opportunities to support the development of researchers' skills throughout their careers.

In the course of 2022/23 a number of developments have helped give research integrity new prominence within the College.

The **RCM Research Ethics Committee** operates a rigorous and supportive approvals process for student and staff projects. During the past 12 months, the committee's membership has expanded, reflecting a desire to involve staff from across the full range of College's research specialisms. A revised process of allocating individual applications to pairs of committee members (rather than the whole committee) ensures that members are able to give applications thorough attention, with any matters of concern to be discussed with the whole committee. New routes for application are under development, in an effort to facilitate applications from researchers working on autoethnography, oral history and archival projects. The Committee has also revised the wording of the Participant Information Sheet template, to clarify how participants' contributions may be shared.

Significant attention has been given to our policies encouraging responsible approaches to **open research**. An increased contract for our Research Data Officer has allowed the development of updated policies on Open Access (with particular focus on UKRI and REF requirements) and on 3rd-party copyright in doctoral theses. These revised policies are regularly updated and have been shared with staff and research students at training sessions. PIs on externally-funded projects have been offered one-to-one guidance on publication strategies that satisfy funder requirements for open access. Our research repository **RCM Research Online** is regularly updated, enabling public access to the full spectrum of research from across the College.

Several significant steps have been taken to meet the Concordat's expectation of support for the **development of researchers**. Membership of the Research and Knowledge Exchange Committee and the Research Degrees Committee has been revised in order to ensure fair representation of different career stages, research fields, and staff members contracts (including hourly-paid staff who do not have research as a formal part of their responsibilities). A significant proportion of our internal research support budget has been used to support staff not contracted to do research, in keeping with the commitment of our Research Strategy to support all staff to be active in research. Bespoke training sessions have been offered to staff and students on research ethics, open research, autoethnography and responsible research supervision. The newly-created post of Doctoral Programmes

Coordinator is enabling an expansion of the training opportunities offered to doctoral students, with new attention being given the 2nd and 3rd-year students.

Members of the **Research Office** have engaged individually with bodies including the UK Reproducibility Network and the Open and Responsible Researcher Reward and Recognition (OR4) project, and with leading figures in the fields of research repositories, open practice research, archiving and data management, to inform ongoing strategy at the College.

2C. Reflections on progress and plans for future developments

This should include a reflection on the previous year's activity including a review of progress and impact of initiatives if known relating to activities referenced in the previous year's statement. Note any issues that have hindered progress, e.g. resourcing or other issues.

This is the RCM's first **Annual Research Integrity Statement**, and it has provided a welcome opportunity to assess progress in relation to other institutions. We have very modest support infrastructures for research, even for a small specialist and institution (SSI), meaning that it is not easy to replicate the levels of oversight, policy development and staff training found in large multi-faculty universities. This Integrity Statement encourages us to reflect upon how we can continue to ensure that the principles of the Concordat to Support Research Integrity inform all aspects of our research culture, within the inevitable constraints of the SSI environment.

There are a number of priorities for the coming year. One of these is **research data management**. We are reassessing our existing 'Data use and retention' guidance document, which was written 5 years ago. Our Research Data Officer is undertaking a survey of current guidance in this area, including the policies of research funders and other institutions. The updated guidance will help ensure that individual researchers comply with current expectations for responsible data storage and retention, and that College processes for longer-term research data management are clearly articulated and consistently implemented.

In June 2022 the College issued a new **Intellectual Property Policy**. This has provided welcome clarity in an area that had not hitherto been explicitly addressed in College guidance. As our work in research commercialisation has developed in the course of 2023, so it has become clear that our IP Policy will continue to need to evolve, in response to changing research priorities and a changing external

landscape. The Research and Knowledge Exchange Committee has recently proposed some amendments to the IP Policy which reflect the principles of the Concordat; these will be taken to Directorate in the coming months.

Like other SSIs the College does not have the luxury of a large staff development unit to provide **staff training**, nor does it have substantial resources to employ external providers. At present the training of research staff is done internally, principally by the Head of Research. In the course of this year we will continue to discuss with fellow SSIs within Conservatoires UK ways to pool resources so that up-to-date training on matters relating to research integrity can be more consistently provided across our staff base.

Section 3: Addressing research misconduct

3A. Statement on processes that the organisation has in place for dealing with allegations of misconduct

Please provide:

- a brief summary of relevant organisation policies/ processes (e.g. research misconduct procedure, whistle-blowing policy, bullying/harassment policy; appointment of a third party to act as confidential liaison for persons wishing to raise concerns) and brief information on the periodic review of research misconduct processes (e.g. date of last review; any major changes during the period under review; date when processes will next be reviewed).

- information on how the organisation creates and embeds a research environment in which all staff, researchers and students feel comfortable to report instances of misconduct (e.g. code of practice for research, whistle-blowing, research misconduct procedure, informal liaison process, website signposting for reporting systems, training, mentoring, reflection and evaluation of policies, practices and procedures).

- anonymised key lessons learned from any investigations into allegations of misconduct which either identified opportunities for improvements in the organisation's investigation procedure and/or related policies / processes/ culture or which showed that they were working well.

The investigation of cases of research misconduct is governed by the RCM's **Staff Disciplinary Procedure**. This details the nature of the investigation and appeals

process and possible disciplinary outcomes. Cases may be reported by any staff member or student, following the guidance offered in the RCM's **Whistleblowing Policy and Procedure**.

At present there is no separate policy for investigating misconduct in research specifically, nor is the process for reporting possible cases of research misconduct especially visibly signposted. This is an area for development in the coming year.

There have been no cases of reported research misconduct in the past academic year.

3B. Information on investigations of research misconduct that have been undertaken

Please complete the table on the number of **formal investigations completed during the period under review** (including investigations which completed during this period but started in a previous academic year). Information from ongoing investigations should not be submitted.

An organisation's procedure may include an initial, preliminary, or screening stage to determine whether a formal investigation needs to be completed. These allegations should be included in the first column but only those that proceeded past this stage, to formal investigations, should be included in the second column.

Type of allegation	Number of allegations			
	Number of allegations reported to the organisation	Number of formal investigations	Number upheld in part after formal investigation	Number upheld in full after formal investigation
Fabrication	0	0	0	0
Falsification	0	0	0	0
Plagiarism	0	0	0	0
Failure to meet legal, ethical and professional obligations	0	0	0	0
Misrepresentation (eg data; involvement; interests; qualification; and/or publication history)	0	0	0	0
Improper dealing with allegations of misconduct	0	0	0	0
Multiple areas of concern (when received in a single allegation)	0	0	0	0
*Other**	0	0	0	0
Total:	0	0	0	0

*If you listed any allegations under the 'Other' category, please give a brief, high-level summary of their type here. Do not give any identifying or confidential information when responding.
[Please insert response if applicable]