



The James
Hutton
Institute

The James Hutton Institute

Annual statement on Research Integrity

2023-2024

Contact information

The James Hutton Institute Research Integrity website

<https://www.hutton.ac.uk/research/integrity>

Director of Science with responsibility for Research Integrity

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Promoting high standards of research integrity and positive research culture.

Description of actions and activities undertaken

Description of current systems and culture

The James Hutton Institute Research Integrity Group (RIG) was established in 2019 in anticipation of the revised concordat to support research integrity. Each main science department within the Institute, including BioSS (Biomathematics & Statistics Scotland), is represented, with support from the Institute Information Governance officer. The group aims to promote best research practice, advise Institute members on matters of research integrity, and investigate allegations of research misconduct. Since its inception the group has further developed and publicised Institute procedures and policies, based on current best practice guidelines, to ensure that the Institute and staff are able to comply with all commitments made under the revised concordat to support research integrity.

The Research Integrity Group has been active in informing Institute Science Department members about why research misconduct is damaging to science, their personal obligations under the concordat to support research integrity and the processes involved in reporting and investigating allegations of research misconduct. The Research Integrity Group has also held open fora where researchers can ask and discuss matters pertaining to research integrity. Multiple lines of reporting, both in person and anonymously, for concerns or queries over research integrity have been established and these are clearly indicated on both the Institute intranet and external web pages. The Institute Intranet is also used to host video presentations and training on research integrity, the procedure used to investigate research misconduct and links to various best practice resources for research and publication. All staff and students are introduced to Institute research integrity policies

within 6 months of starting (forms part of post-graduate induction program) and training and information material is available online as soon as staff have completed IT induction.

Changes and developments during the period under review

In recognition of the idea that research integrity forms part of the underpinning culture of an institution we have integrated awareness training for all staff (research, research enabling and professional services at all grades). We are continually collating best practice guidance from learned societies, professional bodies and publishers as a resource for researchers.

Reflections on progress and plans for future developments

The Institute aims to support Open Science initiatives and as part of this an increase in digital data documentation and dissemination strategies is required. To support this, and provide greater confidence in Institute research integrity, the Institute is investigating electronic notebook solutions and supporting software as part of a wider digital strategy. To provide further training in research integrity the Institute aims to access online training being developed by the University of Dundee (strategic research partner) in the near future.

Addressing research misconduct

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

The procedure for investigating allegations of research misconduct has been revised to accommodate the changing needs of the Institute and is freely available to all Institute members via the Institute intranet. The procedure for investigating allegations of research misconduct is now part of the James Hutton Institute managed document library, providing clear and transparent tracking of changes and the dates that they were made. Multiple lines of reporting and enquiry (including anonymous and by proxy), available to staff at all levels, are in place to ensure that anybody with concerns has a route appropriate to them. Persons making allegations of research misconduct are explicitly covered by the Institute “Whistleblowing” and “Bullying and Harassment” policies. All investigations are transparent, timely, robust and fair, and are conducted independently of the Executive or Governing Board.

Information on investigations of research misconduct that have been undertaken

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	1	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)	1	0	0	0
<i>Other*</i>	0	0	0	0
Total:	2	0	0	0

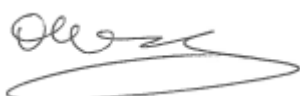
SIGNED



Professor Deb Roberts (08-03-26)

Director of Science with responsibility for Research Integrity

Approved by The James Hutton Institute Board



(24-03-26)