

## Research Integrity Funder Requirements Guidance Document: Medical Research Council (MRC)– At Application Stage

In addition to the below guidance, for existing grant holders, please also refer to the contract of your grant's terms and conditions for any additional or superseding potential requirements on these topics.

### **Bullying and Harassment:**

Please familiarise yourself with the position statement located here:

<https://www.ukri.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/UKRI-020920-BullyingAndHarassmentPositionStatement.pdf>

Please familiarise yourself with the policy located here:

<https://www.ukri.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/UKRI-050920-PreventingHarmSafeguardingInResearchAndInnovationPolicy.pdf>

For further information, please familiarise yourself with the examples of what is bullying and harassment and UKRI's actions:

Please familiarise yourself with the policy located here:

<https://www.ukri.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/UKRI-150321-FullEconomicCostingGrantTermsConditions-Mar2021.pdf>

Of note section 3.6 page 9 of 22:

*“Bullying and Harassment You must have clear, well-publicised policies, processes and training in place consistent with good practice as recommended by the Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service’s (ACAS) ‘Bullying and Harassment in the Workplace: A Guide for Managers and Employers’ or equivalent framework. We expect you to take an organisation-wide approach to prevention, including appropriate leadership and management training and dedicated support on bullying and harassment. Where relevant you should take into account guidance and advice set out by:*

- *1752 Group, on addressing staff sexual misconduct*
- *the Office for Students, on handling harassment and sexual misconduct in higher education*
- *the Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Students in Higher Education, on handling student complaints and academic appeals”*

*UKRI’s Preventing Harm (Safeguarding) in Research and Innovation policy sets out how we expect to be informed about incidences of bullying and harassment relating to UKRI funded activity and the actions we may take where we identify that institutions do not have robust processes in place.”*

### **Research Misconduct:**

Please familiarise yourself with the policy located here: <https://mrc.ukri.org/documents/pdf/mrc-policy-on-research-misconduct/>

and here: <https://mrc.ukri.org/research/policies-and-guidance-for-researchers/>

Of note It states: *“The MRC takes all cases of research misconduct seriously and requires that*

*allegations related to MRC funded research are investigated appropriately. Allegations of research misconduct against MRC staff are investigated in accordance with our [policy \(PDF, 309KB\)](#). Allegations relating to MRC-funded research carried out in Universities or other organisations should be reported to, and investigated by, the relevant employer. Research Organisations must inform the MRC about allegations of research misconduct involving people in receipt of MRC funding or involved with the MRC in any other way (for example as a peer reviewer or a panel member), at the time they decide to undertake a preliminary investigation.”*

For matters concerning research integrity, or if you are an organisation funded by UKRI and need to report an allegation of research misconduct, please contact the designated contacts: MRC:

[simone.bryan@mrc.ukri.org](mailto:simone.bryan@mrc.ukri.org)

as outlined:

<https://www.ukri.org/about-us/policies-standards-and-data/good-research-resource-hub/research-integrity/>

Please familiarise yourself with the policy located here: <https://www.ukri.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/UKRI-050321-PolicyGuidelinesGovernanceOfGoodResearchConduct.pdf>

Of note section 4 page 7 of 11

*“Where an allegation of research misconduct is about someone funded by, or engaged with, Research Council(s) (including acting as a supervisor for a Research Council postgraduate student or engaged with peer review activities), even if it is about work not connected with a grant from a Research Council, the case should be reported to the relevant Council at the stage that it is decided to undertake an informal inquiry – i.e. that there is a reasonable case that research misconduct may have occurred. Depending on outcomes, the relevant Council should also be informed at the following stages:*

- *When the outcome of the informal enquiry is known (e.g. whether the allegation is dismissed or taken through to a formal investigation)*
- *When the outcome of the formal investigation is known (e.g. whether the case is dismissed or a disciplinary hearing is arranged)*
- *When the outcome of the disciplinary hearing is known, and what it was.*

*The Councils reserve the right to take appropriate action about any duties being performed for them at any stage during the process.”*

For further information, please familiarise yourself with the full: Investigating Allegations of Misconduct in Research Policy V3.0: <https://www.ukri.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/UKRI-020920-InvestigatingAllegationsOfMisconductInResearchPolicy.pdf>

### **Conflict of Interest:**

Please familiarise yourself with the guidance on conflict of interests located here:

<https://www.ukri.org/councils/mrc/guidance-for-applicants/check-if-you-are-eligible-for-funding/1-4-responsibilities-of-applicants-including-declaration-of-interests/>

Of note it states “any private, personal or commercial interests relating to an application for funding to the research councils must be declared in a covering letter included as an application attachment... Where the applicant or RO considers that an interest does give rise to a clear conflict, a proposed plan for managing that conflict should be included in the covering letter.

*If new conflicts arise once an award has been made these should be declared and managed using the ROs established processes.”*

Please familiarise yourself with the policy located here:

<https://www.ukri.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/UKRI-050321-PolicyGuidelinesGovernanceOfGoodResearchConduct.pdf>

Of note section RGC 3.1.2 on page 8 of 22

*“You must follow Our Policy and Guidelines on Governance of Good Research Conduct at:*

<https://www.ukri.org/about-us/policies-standards-and-data/good-research-resource-hub/research-integrity/> and ensure that the requirements set out in the Concordat to Support Research Integrity (2012) are met. In particular, You are responsible for ensuring all necessary permissions are obtained before the Project begins, that there is clarity in roles and responsibility among Grant Holders, Research Workers, and Third Parties, as well as investigating and reporting unacceptable research conduct. Any potential conflicts of interest in research identified at the point of application must be declared to Us and subsequently managed.”

For further information, please familiarise yourself with the examples of what interests should be declared and the management of conflicts:

<https://www.ukri.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/UKRI-261120-Declaration-of-Interests-for-applicants-v2.pdf>

Of note on page 1 of 2:

*“As part of this, any private, personal or commercial interests relating to an application for funding to UKRI must be declared in a covering letter included as an application attachment.”*

On page 1 and 2:

“Interests to declare:

1. Personal Remuneration from organisations or project partners involved in the proposed research (other than the named employing organisation)
2. Significant Shareholdings or other Financial Interests in organisations which are involved in or might benefit from the research
3. Research support (financial or in kind) from commercial organisations involved in the grant or which might benefit from the outcome of the research that are not mentioned in the application
4. Un-remunerated involvement with any organisation named on the application or which might benefit from the research or its outcomes
5. Political/pressure group associations
6. Family”

### **Safeguarding:**

Please familiarise yourself with the policy located here:

<https://www.ukri.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/UKRI-150321-FullEconomicCostingGrantTermsConditions-Mar2021.pdf>

Of note section 3.5 page 9 of 22: *“RGC 3.5 Safeguarding All relevant safeguarding legislation must be adhered to, We particularly draw your attention to child protection legislation and the Modern Slavery Act 2015. You must have sufficient policies and/or processes in place in order to foster Safeguarding.”*

For further information, please familiarise yourself with the full preventing harm in ‘safeguarding’ in

research and innovation policy:

<https://www.ukri.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/UKRI-050920-PreventingHarmSafeguardingInResearchAndInnovationPolicy.pdf>

Of note in section 6, page 7-8 of 16

“There should be an agreed process in place for sharing information about upheld allegations against individuals directly involved in the research and innovation activity, and/or risks to the activity by the partner organisations...*Organisations must inform UKRI of the concern or incident in a timely manner so that UKRI can work with the organisation to determine an appropriate course of action to mitigate the risk that harm, or further harm, could occur.* The report should provide a brief factual statement about the nature of the concern or incident, any action taken and any further planned action. No personal information should be included in the report.

Of note in section 6.2, pages 8 and 9 of 16 6.2, “*How organisations should respond to unacceptable personal conduct, requires that we:*

- *In an impartial, fair and timely manner, investigate allegations that a member of staff or student has exploited, abused or harmed another member of staff, student, associated personnel, research and innovation participant or member of the general public. It must:*
- *protect the rights of all individuals involved*
- *take a victim/survivor-centred approach, listen and take concerns seriously, and provide appropriate support for the victim/survivor*
- *take appropriate action*
- ...
- *Have processes and procedures in place to review and manage the risks associated with the continued involvement of an individual in a UKRI grant application or UKRI-funded activity while an allegation of exploitation, abuse or harm is investigated.*
- *If, following the investigation, the allegation of exploitation, abuse or harm against an individual directly involved in a UKRI-funded activity is upheld, the organisation must notify UKRI of the investigation and the decision in a timely manner. Notification should include:*
- *a brief factual statement about the nature of the allegation*
- *the findings of the investigation*
- *what, if any, disciplinary action is being taken and/or remedies are being given to the victim/survivor*
- *what, if any, changes to policy and practice have been implemented in response to this case and what assurances will be put in place as to their effectiveness”*

### **Whistleblowing:**

Please familiarise yourself with the policy located here:

[UKRI-150321-FullEconomicCostingGrantTermsConditions-Mar2021.pdf](#)

Of note section 3.7 page 9 of 22 “*Whistleblowing You must have clear, well-publicised policies and processes in place consistent with good practice recommended by the National Audit Office Assessment Criteria for Whistleblowing policies.*”