

Research Integrity Report 2018/19

Lancaster University has continued to uphold its culture of high research integrity in 2018-19. The institution attended the second annual Universities UK Research Integrity Forum and participated in the 2019 consultation for the revised Concordat to Support Research Integrity. Training and guidance has continued to be delivered during the year to staff and postgraduate researchers with a sustained focus on data protection so that the research community can ensure compliance with recently introduced regulations, the EU GDPR and the UK Data Protection Act 2018.

Lancaster University's devolved Faculty Research Ethics Committees (FREC) have continued to provide timely review of ethical applications overseen by the University Research Ethics Committee (UREC). An academic Chair and Deputy, a range of academic reviewers and Research Services support the FRECs; Governance Services provide additional expert advice for complex data issues. The total number of FREC applications for 2018-19 are shown in the table below with previous years. Figures are also included for those funded projects identified by the researcher as not needing ethical review via the research costing governance checklist.

Submitted Research Ethics Applications

	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19
Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences & Management School	297	232	227
Faculty of Health and Medicine	197	175	181
Faculty of Science and Technology	199	183	178
Total reviewed	693	590	586
FREC review not needed	160	232	154

UREC undertook a review in 2018-19 of applications approved by the FRECs where research involved social media or big data (October), children (January), difficult places or risk to researchers (April) and vulnerable adults (June). The review did not find any significant issues with the FREC review or associated processes and proved a useful exercise to share best practice between faculties and across traditional disciplinary considerations.

Work continued during the year on the development and procurement of a new research ethics application management system (REAMS) to be launched to academics in 2019-20. REAMS will introduce a new self-review process that will allow applicants to identify projects that are deemed by the university as minimal risk and therefore do not need FREC review. An audit of applications that are reviewed in this way will be undertaken each year. REAMS is designed to reduce administrative load for applicants, academic reviewers and professional services staff; saving valuable time whilst enhancing the experience for the academic community to further foster an environment of excellent research integrity.

Four research misconduct complaints were raised in 2018/19. All were dismissed in line with the university's [research misconduct policy](#) following an informal review. The policy will be updated in 2019-20 following drafting undertaken in 2018-19; this update will add further detail to the process of misconduct investigation in line with the [procedure published by the UK Research Integrity Office](#).

Academic Year	Complaint Raised	Formal Investigation Completed	Allegations Upheld (whole or in part)
2014-15	0	0	0
2015-16	1	1	0
2016-17	4	3	1
2017-18	1	0	0
2018-19	4	0	0