

List of key topics for the training of research integrity champions, leads and advisers

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The following sets out broad areas of knowledge which the UK Research Integrity Office considers that Research Integrity Champions and similar roles need to be informed about, either by their organisation or by UKRIO. For reasons of space, the topics below refer solely to the Champion role; however, they are relevant to all types of research integrity champion, adviser, lead or contact – whatever their title.

This document is intended to be used in tandem with UKRIO's [guidance](#) on *Research Integrity Champions, Leads & Advisors*.

What is the Champion role? What is it not? [purpose/responsibilities/limitations]

- Is there a hierarchy of Champions or just one type? If the former, what are the differences between the roles?
- Awareness-raising?
- Signposting sources of advice/support?
- Giving advice/ support? (rather than just signposting)
- Help with misconduct allegations? (i.e. helping people raise concerns, tell them of the avenues available to them)
- Dispute resolution?
- Help with misconduct investigations? (i.e. being a part of the actual investigation process)
- Do they give advice on ethics or does that come from elsewhere?
- It will be helpful to explore with the Champions/ potential Champions what knowledge and skills they themselves feel they need to have to do the role well.

How does the Champion role fit into the institution's research policy/ aims/aspirations?

How does the Champion role fit into the institution's research governance structures etc.?

- What is the process for being sought out to give advice/ support?
- What is the process for giving advice/ support?
 - What is the process for giving pastoral care, or referring people to such?
- What is the process if an allegation of misconduct is brought to them?
 - How is confidentiality ensured?
 - How are competing interests declared and managed?
 - Including those relating with any investigation of misconduct which can be linked to activities undertaken as part of a Champion role.
- Where can Champions get help and support of their own, including pastoral care?

Overview of research integrity in the national context

- Research integrity as a concept – what is it, what isn't it?
- Research integrity in the national and international context
- 'Tips and tricks for giving advice'
- Impact of research culture, including incentives and the concept of 'publish or perish'
- Impact of the pandemic on research practice

What types of issue are Champions likely to encounter (including what issues they believe they will encounter)?

'How to be a good Champion' – key issues to consider

- Listening.
- That there are grey areas/ great complexities, and answers are not always straightforward.
- Don't jump to conclusions.
- Impartiality, there are always other angles.
- Avoid competing interests/ personal contacts.
- However, as a Champion working in a school/ department/ etc. and giving advice and support to researchers working there, the Champion will often know the people involved. How to handle this?

- Avoidable mistakes, human error and sloppy research practices.
- Dispute resolution.
- Knowing when an issue falls outside of the scope of a Champion role to address, and signposting more appropriate sources of help.

Case studies/dilemmas

Further reading

UKRIO's guidance *Good Practice in Research: Research Integrity Champions, Leads & Advisers* gives full information on establishing such systems of support, including illustrative examples of how they can work in practice and discussion of other options for providing support, guidance, and advice. Case studies showing how UK institutions have implemented a model of local research integrity champions are available on our website.



Promoting integrity and high ethical standards in research
Providing confidential, independent, and expert support

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